THE *ARTHAŚĀSTRA*: ASSESSING THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF AN
ANCIENT INDIAN TREATISE ON STATECRAFT

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ABHISHEK KUMAR, MAJOR, INDIAN ARMY
B.S., Jawahar Lal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, 2003

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Ancient texts on strategy studied the struggle for power in elaborate detail. Despite advancements in science and technology, eminent political and military leaders consistently emphasize the need to revisit ancient strategic texts. In the midst of scholars such as Sun-Tzu and Thucydides, Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* remains a lesser-known work from ancient India. This thesis researches Kautilya's magnum opus on statecraft and investigates the treatise's contemporary relevance. Although the treatise studies the complete socio-economic spectrum of a state's affairs, this paper identifies concepts relevant to the modern idea of national power and uses them to assess China's geo-political environment. This research found that Kautilya's prioritization of a state's elements of national power and his focus on enhancing a state's power, find similarity in contemporary China's policy choices. The treatise assists foreign policy formulation by offering a "Kautilyan" perspective of the power struggle between states. This research highlights the importance of rediscovering ancient strategic scholars and their value towards gaining a cultural insight in the Asian geo-political environment. In an age of increasing relevance of Asian strategic cultures, a focused and unbiased study of Kautilya's strategic thought, will certainly not be in vain.

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Approved by:

_____, Thesis Committee Chair
Mark R. Wilcox, M.A

_____, Member
Phillip G. Pattee, Ph.D.

_____, Member
Daniel C Honken, M.S

Accepted this 10th day of June 2016 by:

_____, Director, Graduate Degree Programs
Robert F. Baumann, Ph.D.

ABSTRACT

THE *ARTHAŚĀSTRA*: ASSESSING THE CONTEMPORARY RELEVANCE OF AN ANCIENT INDIAN TREATISE, by Major Abhishek Kumar, 133 pages.

Ancient texts on strategy studied the struggle for power in elaborate detail. Despite advancements in science and technology, eminent political and military leaders consistently emphasize the need to revisit ancient strategic texts. In the midst of scholars such as Sun-Tzu and Thucydides, Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* remains a lesser-known work from ancient India.

This thesis researches Kautilya's magnum opus on statecraft and investigates the treatise's contemporary relevance. Although the treatise studies the complete socio-economic spectrum of a state's affairs, this paper identifies concepts relevant to the modern idea of national power and uses them to assess China's geo-political environment.

This research found that Kautilya's prioritization of a state's elements of national power and his focus on enhancing a state's power, find similarity in contemporary China's policy choices. The treatise assists foreign policy formulation by offering a "Kautilyan" perspective of the power struggle between states.

This research highlights the importance of rediscovering ancient strategic scholars and their value towards gaining a cultural insight in the Asian geo-political environment. In an age of increasing relevance of Asian strategic cultures, a focused and unbiased study of Kautilya's strategic thought, will certainly not be in vain.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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ACRONYMS

CCP   Chinese Communist Party.

RFE   Russian Far East

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

> Not as an essay which is to win applause of the moment, but as a possession for all time.
>
> — Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*

Overview

Strategists' respect for Thucydides and Sun Tzu as eminent strategic thinkers of the ancient world rests in the fact that, "there are elemental features of human strategy that are common across time and space."[1] Indian strategists similarly hold an ancient Indian strategist–Kautilya, in high regard. However, in comparison to Thucydides and Sun Tzu, Kautilya is relatively unknown outside the Indian subcontinent.

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce Kautilya's treatise on statecraft–the *Arthaśāstra*, set the stage for questioning his treatise's contemporary relevance, and introduce the concept of contemporary strategic thought.

An Overview of Kautilya, the Mauryan Empire, and the *Arthaśāstra*

Kautilya, or Chanakya, was a famous teacher at Taxila University (near Peshawar, in modern Pakistan). Following the death of Alexander the Great, Kautilya planned and coordinated the liberation of North Western India by his protégé-Chandragupta Maurya. With Kautilya's shrewd guidance, Chandragupta overthrew the existing rule of the Nanda

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[1] Lawrence Freedman, *Strategy: A History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3, accessed April 26 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

Kings and founded the Mauryan Empire in 322 BCE. Chandragupta, who ruled from 324 to 301 BCE, thus earned the title of a liberator and the first emperor of *Bharata* or India.[2]

Kautilya was thus the brains behind the establishment of the Mauryan Empire. He went on to compile the *Arthaśāstra* as a guide for the Mauryan Emperors. The treatise exerted a profound influence on the development of political ideas in traditional India.[3]

The Mauryan Empire, underpinned and guided by Kautilya's strategic thought, existed from 326 BCE to 184 BCE, a duration of approximately 143 years.[4] One of Chandragupta's most famous successors was Emperor Asoka (see figure 1). Asoka's empire based out of Pataliputra (today known as Patna in eastern India) included large portions of modern day India, Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.[5]

Breena Coates (California State University, San Bernardino) and Col. Jeffrey Caton (US Army) graphically (see figure 2) place Kautilya in chronological context with great strategic thinkers such as Sun-Tzu, Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Clausewitz.[6] The

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[2] Col Harjeet Singh, *The Kautilya Arthaśāstra a Military Perspective* (New Delhi: KW Publishers, 2013), 1, accessed December 11, 2015, http://www.claws.in/images/publication_pdf/1381380497MP-38%20inside.pdf; Know India, "Ancient History," accessed October 16, 2015, http://knowindia.gov.in/knowindia/culture_heritage.php?id=16.

[3] Singh, 1.

[4] James Heitzman and Robert L. Worden, eds., *India: A Country Study* (Washington, DC: Federal Research Division, Library of Congress, 1996), 9, accessed December 11, 2015, https://cdn.loc.gov/master/frd/frdcstdy/in/indiacountrystud00heit/indiacountrystud00heit.pdf.

[5] John McLeod, *History of India* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2002), accessed May 5, 2016, ProQuest ebrary; Heitzman and Worden, 9.

[6] Breena Coates and Col. Jeffrey Caton, "The Ultimate Pragmatist: Kautilya's Philosophy on Smart Power in National Security" (paper presented at 2010 ISME

figure provides a historical reference for Kautilya and depicts Kautilya to be in the same

"league" as other eminent ancient and medieval strategists.

Figure 1.   The Mauryan Empire during Emperor Asoka's reign

Source: Vincent A. Smith, *The Oxford History of India, from the Earliest Times to the End of 1911* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920), 105, accessed March 4, 2016, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/mdp.39015024361977.

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program, University of San Diego, January 28, 2010), accessed December 11, 2015, http://isme.tamu.edu/ISME10/isme10.html.
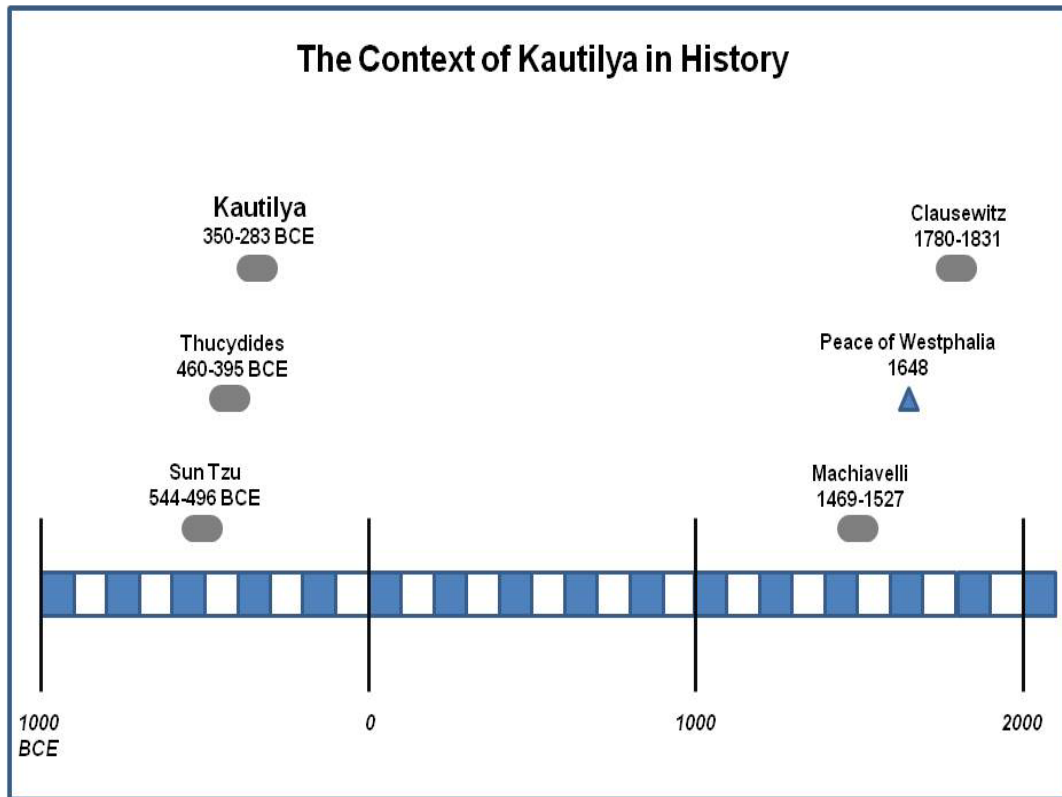
Figure 2.   Kautilya with reference to other strategic thinkers

Source: Breena Coates and Col. Jeffrey Caton, "The Ultimate Pragmatist: Kautilya's Philosophy on Smart Power in National Security" (paper presented at 2010 ISME program, University of San Diego, January 28, 2010), accessed December 11, 2015, http://isme.tamu.edu/ISME10/Coates-Caton10.doc, 21.

From the first century CE, India has had a significant socio-religious impact on Chinese culture. In a systematic effort, ancient Chinese scholars translated a large number of ancient Indian scriptures to Chinese.[7] Ancient Chinese monks and scholars reserved

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[7] John Kieschnick and Meir Shahar, ed., *India in the Chinese Imagination: Myth, Religion, and Thought* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 4-5, accessed March 20, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

the term "'Middle Kingdom' (*zhongguo*)" for India and described India's "perfection as a 'borderland complex.'"[8]

Chinese history is replete with ancient Chinese Buddhist monarchs who have admired and emulated Emperor Asoka's actions. In "Buddhist Asia [China, Japan, and Korea]", legends of Asoka's role in unifying India as part of the Mauryan empire were treated as a "paradigm of Buddhist kingship *par excellence*."[9] Arguably, the size and influence of Asoka's Empire is attributable to the King's sound strategy and policies, which were a direct result of studying Kautilya's magnum opus, the *Arthaśāstra*.

Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* examines "statecraft and . . . issues of diplomacy, war, peace, intelligence, security, and political economy."[10] Scholars identify the *Arthaśāstra* as a "pioneering" study on the "grand theory of warfare" within a realist framework of international political order.[11] The treatise comprises 15 different books, addressing the objectives of a state. A dominant topic throughout the treatise is the creation and use of

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[8] Ibid.

[9] Shi Zhiru, "From Bodily Relic to Dharma Relic Stūpa: Chinese Materialization of the Aśoka Legend in the Wuyue Period," in *India in the Chinese Imagination: Myth, Religion, and Thought*, ed. John Kieschnick and Meir Shahar (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014), 85, 83-107, accessed March 20, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[10] P. K. Gautam, IDSA Monograph Series, vol. 20, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2013), 1, accessed March 20, 2016, http://www.idsa.in/monograph/OneHundredYearsofKautilyas Arthasastra.

[11] Daniel Coetzee, *Philosophers of War: The Evolution of History's Greatest Military Thinkers* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2013), 75, accessed April 26, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

an elaborate secret service mechanism.[12] Kautilya's treatise provides prescriptive advice for formulating domestic and external policies of a state. The treatise is also a reflection of ancient Indian strategic culture and thought as a whole.

Scholars agree that Kautilya served in providing, compiling, and analyzing ideas in the treatise. Scholars agree that *Arthaśāstra* is a *compilation* of ideas of strategic thought, which existed in India from 650 BCE onwards.[13] John A. Lynn, supports this idea by identifying the treatise as "a compendium of Indian political thought...it represents the dominant discourse, not simply the idiosyncratic product of a single mind."[14] To maintain a uniformity of terms, the contents of Kautilya's treatise need to be examined and associated with contemporary vocabulary.

Scholars describe the contents of Kautilya's treatise as rules, doctrines, concepts, models, and theories. Kautilya himself describes his work as being composed of, "precise words, doctrines and sense."[15] George Modelski calls the *Arthaśāstra* a "manual of statecraft [based upon] a collection of *rules* [italics added]," which was "disseminated by

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[12] Kauṭilya, *The Arthashastra*, trans. L N. Rangarajan (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1992), Kindle Location 562-571. Hereafter refered to as Rangarajan.

[13] Sachin More, IDSA Monograph Series, vol. 31, *Arthasastra: Lessons for the Contemporary Security Environment with South Asia as a Case Study* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2014), 13-14, accessed March 6, 2016, http://www.idsa.in/monograph/arthasastraforsouthasiasecurity_smore_240114.

[14] John A. Lynn, ed., *Battle: A History of Combat and Culture* (New York: Basic Books, 2008), 53-54, accessed March 6, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[15] Rangarajan, Kindle Location 1851.

'schools' and was intended to be learnt, often by heart."[16] To ease further research, this paper will consider the *Arthaśāstra* as Kautilya's doctrine i.e. a set ideas or beliefs that were taught to be true in ancient India.[17] For the purposes of this paper, the words concepts, models, theories, and ideas will interchangeably refer to the contents of Kautilya's doctrine in the *Arthaśāstra.* Moreover, since this treatise was written in an ancient Indian language-Sanskrit-this paper will identify Kautilya's concepts and ideas using their original Sanskrit terminology.

The original treatise being in Sanskrit, some of Kautilya's concepts cannot be translated accurately and completely in English. Relating some of the *Arthaśāstra*'s concepts to a unique Sanskrit word adds to a reader's understanding of Indian strategic thought and enables the creation of a "Kautilyan" vocabulary. To assist the reader in understanding the approximate meanings, this paper will include the English translations in brackets. Despite Kautilya's role in establishing the first Indian empire and his standing in Indian strategic culture, contemporary global awareness about his treatise is relatively limited.

On running a Google Scholar search with the names of Kautilya, Sun-Tzu, Thucydides, Machiavelli, and Clausewitz as keywords, Kautilya turns up in the least number of search results (see figure 3). The number of search results provides a rough indication of contemporary awareness about Kautilya and his work in comparison to

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[16] George Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *The American Political Science Review* 58, no. 3 (September 1964): 550, accessed March 6, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1953131.

[17] Merriam Webster, "Doctrine," accessed March 6, 2016, http://www. merriam-webster.com/dictionary/doctrine.

other ancient or medieval strategic thinkers. The graph also mirrors scholars' lack of inclination in citing Kautilya in contemporary strategic works. In order to explore an appropriate place for Kautilya's doctrine among modern strategic thought, this chapter needs to introduce the subject of contemporary strategic thought.
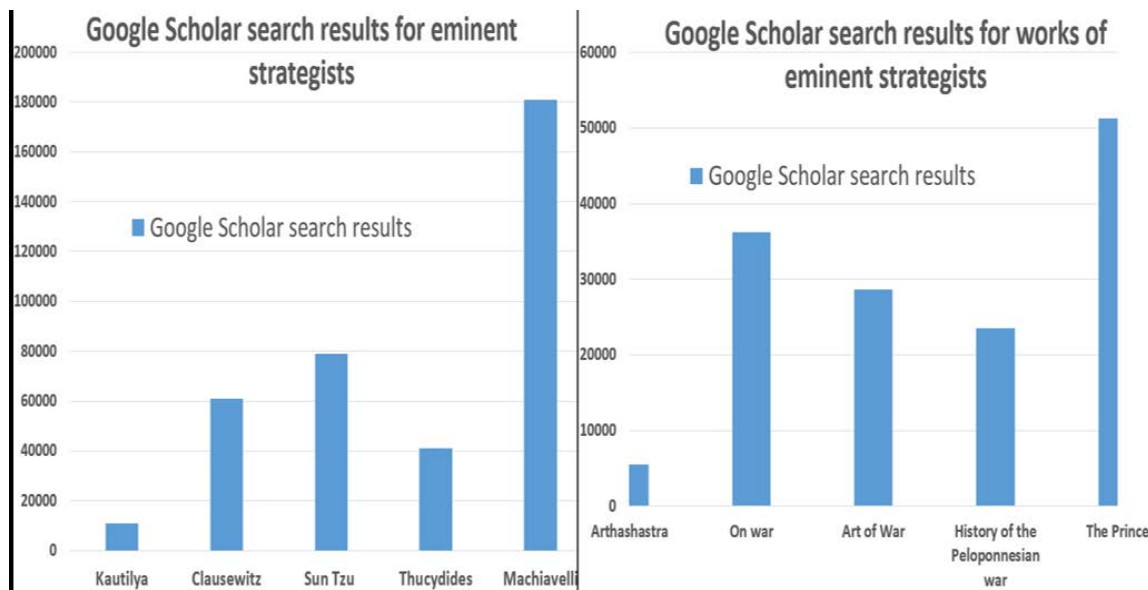
Figure 3.   Search Results on Google Scholar for eminent strategists

Source: Created by author.

Contemporary Strategic Thought – A Brief Overview

Our current strategic thought is a product of change and development over the course of history; in this evolution, theorists on strategy played a key role.[18] Clausewitz,

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[18] J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., "A Survey of the Theory of Strategy," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S.

Jomini, Liddell Hart, Beaufre, Luttwak, and Van Creveld are some of the important theorists of contemporary Western strategy while Sun Tzu, Kautilya, and Musashi are theorists of strategy from Chinese, Indian, and Japanese civilizations, respectively.[19]

Traditionally, usage of the word strategy was limited to the military domain; however, contemporary usage of strategy is more inclusive in nature. The classical usage of the word strategy was restricted to military maneuvers to win wars. Strategy included all the military maneuvers required to arrive at the battlefield; battles in turn were in the domain of tactics. Contemporary usage of the term strategy refers to a problem solving process for military, national security, personal, business, sports, and other domains.[20] The military moved towards the term operational art to describe what was classically termed as strategy. In security circles, strategy has evolved to include the usage of all elements of power available to a state [21]

Unlike traditional theories on strategy, the contemporary concept of strategy relates ends, ways, means, and risks.[22] Traditional theorists such as Jomini and Liddell Hart equated strategy with ways, i.e. as a relationship between ends and means. In

Army War College, 2012), 13, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategic studiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1109.pdf.

[19] Glenn K. Cunningham, "Eastern Strategic Traditions: Un-American Ways of War," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 133-135, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1109.pdf.

[20] Bartholomees, 13-16.

[21] Ibid.

[22] Ibid.

contemporary parlance, this approach would be akin to the "short-term planning process" carried out by a military theater commander.[23]

In view of the relative lack of contemporary global awareness about Kautilya's treatise, one can easily propose an argument that the value of the *Arthaśāstra* lies as a historical text, rather than as a work relevant to contemporary strategic thought. To answer this argument, this paper shall test a hypothesis: the *Arthaśāstra* is relevant to contemporary strategic thought. In order to test this hypothesis and streamline further research, this paper presents certain research questions.

Research Questions

In order to establish the *Arthaśāstra*'s contemporary relevance, this paper will seek to answer the primary research question: how is Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* relevant to contemporary strategic thought? From the primary research question, four natural secondary questions emerge. The first secondary research question is: what are the key elements of Kautilya's strategic thought as explained in the *Arthaśāstra*? Another secondary research question, which this paper will endeavor to explore is: what is contemporary strategic thought? Having researched both Kautilya's strategic thought and contemporary strategic thought, the third research question will compare the two by answering: what are the similarities and dissimilarities between the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought?

The relevance of the *Arthaśāstra* needs verification by applying the treatise's strategic ideas to our contemporary geo-political environment. Hence, we arrive at the

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[23] Bartholomees, 15-16.

fourth and final secondary research question: how can we use Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* to assess the contemporary geo-political environment?

Thesis

The thesis put forward by this study is that the *Arthaśāstra* is relevant to contemporary strategic thought, because it explicates the concept of national power and assists in understanding the application of national power.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study lies in promoting an understanding of non-western strategic thought, and stimulating further research into Kautilya's treatise by exploring the contemporary relevance of the *Arthaśāstra*. In a multi-polar globalized world, allies and enemies of western nations are no longer limited to the western hemisphere alone. Potential coalition partners and adversaries from the eastern hemisphere base their strategy on non-Western strategists and theorists. In the current age of coalition warfare, Kautilya enhances understanding of the strategic thought of non-western partners and adversaries. As India, Japan, and China play an increasingly important global role, the works of Kautilya and Sun Tzu become relevant for understanding Indian and Chinese strategic thought.[24] The contemporary relevance of this paper lies in identifying Kautilya's ideas, which can contribute to global strategic thought.

Contemporary research on the *Arthaśāstra* indicates the potential contribution of the treatise to strategic thought. Military researchers such as the Indian Air Force's Wing

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[24] Cunningham, 133-134.

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Commander Sachin More argue that "*Arthaśāstra* identifies fundamental themes through models and paradigms that have universal validity" and are underpinned by Kautilya's cohesive understanding of the factors that promote stability and progress for a state.[25] This paper's research should thus support and promote further research into Kautilya's treatise.

The *Arthaśāstra*, contemporary strategic thought, and the contemporary geo-political environment are broad topics of research by themselves. Therefore, this thesis requires a scope and certain delimitations to focus the efforts of research and analysis.

Scope and Delimitations

This study of *Arthaśāstra* will be organized in five chapters. The first chapter will provide an overview of the treatise and introduce the evolution of contemporary strategic thought. The second chapter will review literature on the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought. The literature review will examine and identify Kautilya's strategic ideas related to national power in his treatise and similar ideas which influence contemporary strategic thought. The third chapter will explain the research methodology for collecting and analyzing data to answer the primary and secondary research questions. As this thesis aims to verify the contemporary relevance of the *Arthaśāstra*, a case study approach will be used to assess the relevance of Kautilya's doctrine as enshrined in the *Arthaśāstra*.

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[25] Sachin More, IDSA Monograph Series, vol. 31, *Arthasastra: Lessons for the Contemporary Security Environment with South Asia as a Case Study* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2014), 64-65, accessed November 3, 2015, http://idsa.in/monograph/arthasastraforsouthasiasecurity_smore_240114.

The fourth chapter will use China as a case study and research into China's geo-political environment as a means to analyze the data collected thus far. This chapter will also use *Arthaśāstra* as a lens through which to view the contemporary Chinese geo-strategic environment. The fifth and final chapter will draw conclusions from the analysis. This chapter will also present recommendations and suggested topics for further research. To focus the research efforts of this thesis, delimiting the scope is essential.

During research on the *Arthaśāstra*, contemporary strategic thought, and China's geo-political environment, this study will focus on the concept of national power and the application of national power in an international system. Since China's contemporary geo-political environment is a large subject for research in itself, this thesis will focus on China's strategic "behavior" and the Chinese geo-political environment from 1995-2016.

The study of China's strategic behavior and the Chinese geo-political environment will aim at drawing inferences to examine the *Arthaśāstra*'s relevance. Research into China's strategic behavior will include an examination of China's national interests, and strategic policy choices. The investigation of China's geo-political environment will include China's internal power structure and China's foreign relations with global powers and important neighbors. An exhaustive study of China's foreign relations is beyond the scope of this study.

Since an in-depth analysis of inter-state powers is beyond the scope of this study, this paper will be making certain broad assumptions about China's relative power in comparison to global powers and regional states. The purpose of making these assumptions is to continue the analysis of China's geo-politcal environment from the perspective of Kautilya's strategic thought.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kautilya's *Arthasastra* remains with us an impressive monument to man's ability to reason clearly, if abstractly, about the most complex problems of social and international affairs.

— George Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *The American Political Science Review*

Overview

This study aims to establish the contemporary relevance of an ancient treatise on statecraft titled *Arthaśāstra*, written by an Indian scholar named Kautilya. Kautilya was the main planner behind the establishment of the Mauryan Empire in India in 322 BCE. His doctrine played a major role in strengthening the national power of the Mauryan Empire and reducing the power of enemy states.

Over five chapters, this paper seeks to answer the primary research question: how is Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* relevant to contemporary strategic thought? Chapter 1 provided a historical overview of Kautilya's treatise, introduced contemporary strategic thought, and set the stage for posing certain research questions. Chapter 2 will review literature on Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought.

The purpose of the literature review is to examine and identify Kautilya's ideas with respect to national power and analogous ideas in contemporary strategic thought. The literature review for the *Arthaśāstra* comprises two parts. The first part of this chapter will study English translations of the *Arthaśāstra* as primary sources of literature and examine secondary scholarly works written about the *Arthaśāstra*. The second part of

this chapter will review existing works on contemporary strategic thought, to identify key ideas and concepts related to the idea of national power.

Consequent to the literature review, this chapter seeks to answer two secondary research questions delimited to the concept of national power. The first part of the literature reviews primary and secondary works on the *Arthaśāstra* and seeks answers to: what are the key elements of Kautilya's strategic thought as explained in the *Arthaśāstra*? The second part of this chapter will review works on contemporary strategic thought and seek answers regarding: what is contemporary strategic thought?

<u>Origins of the *Arthaśāstra* and Primary Sources of Literature</u>

Kautilya wrote the treatise titled *Arthaśāstra* in Sanskrit, an ancient Indian language, on palm leaves somewhere between the fourth and third centuries BCE. The treatise compiles principles Kautilya followed as a minister of the Mauryan Empire.[26] The limited shelf life of the *Arthaśāstra*'s palm leaf manuscripts necessitated creation of copies by scribes, similar to modern day reprints.[27]

This paper reviewed three different English translations of the *Arthaśāstra.* Palm leaf manuscripts were the basis for English translations by Dr. R. Shamasastry and Dr. RP Kangle.[28] Dr. R. Shamasastry, as the chief librarian of the Mysore Government

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[26] Herbert H. Gowen, "The Indian Machiavelli' or Political Theory in India Two Thousand Years Ago," *Political Science Quarterly* 44, no. 2 (June 1929): 176, accessed November 3, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2142992.

[27] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra,* 43.

[28] Kautilya, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra,* trans. R. Shamasastry (Bangalore: Government Press, 1915), ii, accessed November 3, 2015, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/

Oriental Library, carried out the first English translation in 1915.[29] Dr. RP Kangle's later translation of the book has three volumes, one of which is a detailed analysis.[30] Kangle's version has elaborate footnotes cross-referenced with other ancient Indian texts. A third author, LN Rangarajan, utilized Shamasastry's and Kangle's translations to produce another modern translation with regrouped verses and detailed remarks.[31] These three translations are the primary sources of literature on the *Arthaśāstra* for this paper. *Arthaśāstra* has been the object of significant research by scholars both before and after publication of Shamasastry's English translation of the treatise. Modern historians and political scientists have studied and researched *Arthaśāstra* resulting in a significant number of secondary sources of literature on the treatise.

<div align="center">Secondary Sources of Literature on the Arthaśāstra</div>

The secondary sources of literature include two categories of works. The first category is the work carried out by Indian authors and the second category is the work carried out by western scholars. The most recent secondary sources of literature are primarily Indian articles and monographs published by the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA) and Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), both in New

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pt?id=umn.31951p009966161;view=1up;seq=7; Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra*, 44-46. Hereafter referred to as Shamasastry.

[29] Kris Manjapra, *Age of Entanglement: German and Indian Intellectuals Across Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 366, accessed November 3, 2015, ProQuest ebrary.

[30] R. P. Kangle, *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra*, Part III, 2nd ed. (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1986), 1.

[31] Rangarajan, Kindle location 94.

Delhi, India. In his monograph, Colonel (retired) P.K Gautam (Indian Army) examines the conceptual framework of the treatise and the scholarly controversies surrounding the *Arthaśāstra*, and identifies opportunities for further research.[32] Colonel (Retired) Harjeet Singh (Indian Army) provides a military perspective of the *Arthaśāstra*, in his monograph.[33] Wing Commander Sachin More (Indian Air Force) attempts to establish the contemporary relevance of *Arthaśāstra.* In the first chapter of his monograph, Sachin More establishes the history, themes, construct, and concepts of *Arthaśāstra.* In later chapters, he uses South Asia (Pakistan) as a case study, wherein he uses the *Arthaśāstra*'s concepts to assess and understand Pakistan's contemporary security environment.[34]

Rashed-Uz-Zaman, a contemporary Bangladeshi author, has placed a lot of weight on understanding the *Arthaśāstra* in order to understand India's strategic culture. He relates Kautilya's doctrine to India's policy choices post-independence.[35] Zaman cautions against using the treatise as a magical solution for explaining India's strategic behavior. He argues against generalizing the *Arthaśāstra* as a part of a "universal theory of strategic behavior", since different nations perform "realist calculations in ways that fit one's values, not the logic of some general theory of deterrence."[36]

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[32] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra,* 1.

[33] Singh, 2.

[34] More, 8-10.

[35] Rashed Uz Zaman, "Kautilya: The Indian Strategic Thinker and Indian Strategic Culture," *Comparative Strategy* 25, no. 3 (2006): 231-245, accessed December 30, 2015, http://www-tandfonline-com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/01495930600956260.

[36] Ibid., 244.

Among works of western scholars, George Modelski's article analyzes the treatise and identifies key aspects of Kautilya's foreign policy doctrine.[37] Modelski argues for the *Arthaśāstra*'s contemporary relevance due to the treatise's "abstractness," i.e Kautilya does not refer to historical experiences or contemporary events to formulate or support his concepts.[38]

In the *U.S Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, Glenn K. Cunningham identifies the value of Kautilya's treatise as a strategic text. Cunningham asserts that "The *Arthashastra* is one of the earliest and most complete treatments of holistic strategic-level leadership in existence . . . Every resource, every element of national power, every waking moment of a ruler's days, should be spent with one intent: hegemonic conquest."[39]

Michael Liebig, a fellow of South Asia Institute (SAI), Heidelberg University, Germany identifies six pivotal idea clusters in his paper on *Arthaśāstra.* Liebig credits Kautilya with having anticipated the modern concepts of Machiavelli, Hobbes, Hans J. Morgenthau, and Max Weber. He promotes the treatise as a key for understanding modern day India's strategic culture.[40]

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[37] Modelski, 549-560.

[38] Ibid., 550.

[39] Cunningham, 137.

[40] Michael Liebig, "Kautilya's Arthaśāstra: A Classic Text of Statecraft and an Untapped Political Science Resource" (working paper no. 74, University of Heidelberg, 2014), 1, accessed November 10, 2015, http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/volltext server/17144/.

Other secondary source authors include, John A. Lynn, Daniel Coetzee, Roger Boesche, and Herbert H. Gowen, who have written about *Arthaśāstra* from historical perspectives. These scholars compare *Arthaśāstra* with other Sanskrit works written in ancient India, Kautilya's biography, and key elements of his doctrine.[41]

Coates and Caton compare Kautilya's thoughts and philosophy to contemporary ethical and strategic concepts. Coates and Caton use diagrams, which compare Kautilya's ideas with contemporary strategic thought. The authors credit Kautilya for being pragmatic in his approach towards allies: "Kautilya never lost cognizance of the fact that allies could easily become enemies depending on the dictates of the environment."[42]

This review of the secondary sources of literature indicates certain scholarly debates and scholarly trends with respect to the treatise.

<u>Scholarly Debates</u>

Scholars identify an unresolved debate regarding the treatise's authorship and its age.[43] Coetzee suggests that "A *minority* [italics added] group of scholars argue that the *Arthaśāstra* was a collective effort by several thinkers over a wide period, and it is probable that Kautilya was not the first writer on the science of statecraft."[44] Sachin More

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[41] Lynn, 53-72; Gowen, 173-92; Coetzee, 75-83; Roger Boesche, "Kautilya's Arthas´astra On War and Diplomacy in Ancient India," *The Journal of Military History* 67, no. 1 (January 2003): 9-37, accessed March 24, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/195624508?accountid=28992.

[42] Coates and Caton, 9.

[43] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra,* 37-46.

[44] Coetzee, 75.

asserts that Kautilya's vision and existing sources of strategic thought helped create a

coherent strategy for the Mauryan Empire.[45] In order to derive maximum value from the

treatise, Gautam argues that "Kautilya [himself] admits that it [*Arthaśāstra*] is a

compilation of all previous knowledge . . . The *focus should be on the essence of the work*

[italics added] rather than on issues of date or authorship."[46] A review of literature on the

treatise indicates that a majority of scholars has attributed the authorship of *Arthaśāstra*

to Kautilya; hence, this study will assume the same. Furthermore, this study will assume

that Kautilya analyzed and compiled strategic thought in ancient India using his own

understanding and wisdom.

The review of literature reveals a debate over the comparison of *Arthaśāstra* to

Machiavelli's *The Prince*, wherein most scholars are against generalizing Kautilya as an

"Indian Machiavelli." *The Prince* is primarily about politics, statecraft, and the art of war,

whereas the *Arthaśāstra* has a larger scope i.e., public administration, judicial system,

ethics, statecraft, warfare, and economic policies.[47] G. Bhagat differentiates between the

two works by arguing that Machiavelli placed the "art of war" as the king's primary

concern, whereas for Kautilya the happiness of the state's population was the sole

objective.[48] Kangle identifies dissimilarities between methodologies in both works,

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[45] More, 13-14.

[46] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra*, 42.

[47] G. Bhagat, "Kautilya Revisited and Re-Visioned," *The Indian Journal of Political Science* 51, no. 2 (April-June 1990): 190-192, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.jstor.org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/stable/41855486.

[48] Bhagat, 191.

wherein while Machiavelli looks at history for drawing conclusions, Kautilya ignores history and focuses on all possible permutations for a given situation.[49] Since the *Arthaśāstra* is approximately 17 centuries older than *The Prince*, and each work has its own unique niche in strategic thought, Rangarajan criticizes scholars for giving Kautilya the sobriquet of an 'Indian Machiavelli'.[50] This paper will not weigh in on this debate, but will focus more on identifying the strategic concepts of the *Arthaśāstra.*

Although debates have contributed towards enhancing scholarly interest and research in the *Arthaśāstra*, various other factors have contributed to an overall waning of scholarly interest in the treatise.

<div align="center">Waning Interest in the Arthaśāstra</div>

The passage of time has witnessed a declining interest in Kautilya's work. Publication of the first English translation of Arthaśāstra in 1915 sparked a significant amount of intellectual curiosity and research. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, European interest in India's ancient past had led to the establishment of Indology[51] departments in universities across the developed world. Independent India's first Prime Minister, Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru immensely valued the *Arthaśāstra*.[52] In the twenty-first century, Sanskrit's decline in popularity, the death of prominent

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[49] Kangle, Part III, 272.

[50] Rangarajan, Kindle location 612-616.

[51] Merriam Webster dictionary defines Indology as the study of India and its people. Merriam-Webster, "Indology," accessed November 3, 2015, http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/indology.

[52] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra*, 15-21.

Indologists, and closure of Indology departments have contributed to a decline in interest in the *Arthaśāstra*.[53]

This section of the literature review identified the literature on Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra*, debates over the treatise's origins, comparisons between Kautilya and Machiavelli, and a declining interest among contemporary scholars in the *Arthaśāstra*. The next part of the chapter will identify various concepts and ideas in the *Arthaśāstra*, which could be relevant to more contemporary strategic thought.

<u>Understanding the Strategic Thought of *Arthaśāstra*</u>

> In the happiness of his subjects lies the king's happiness; in their welfare his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him whatever pleases his subjects.[54]

Understanding the *Arthaśāstra* requires an appreciation for *Arthaśāstra*'s root word *Artha*. Kautilya explains the term *Arthaśāstra* as the "Science of Polity" which explores the "means of acquiring and maintaining the earth."[55] Kautilya's treatise has an overarching aim of achieving *Artha* (profit or wealth) for the state. *Artha* is a part of ancient India's four broad aims of human endeavor i.e., *Dharma* (moral behavior), *Artha* (profit or wealth), *Kama* (sensual pleasure), and *Moksha* (salvation).[56] In the *Arthaśāstra*, Kautilya argues for the primacy of *Artha* despite the inter-dependence of the other three pursuits of human endeavor. Kautilya elaborates that since *Dharma* (propriety) and *Kama*

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[53] Ibid.

[54] Rangarajan.

[55] Shamasastry, 515.

[56] Rangarajan, Kindle location 124.

(sensual pleasure) are critically dependent upon *Artha* (wealth) for their realization, *Artha* (wealth) alone is the most important out of the three.[57] From Kautilya's emphasis on *Artha*, Sachin More deduces that the Kautilyan state must adopt economically viable and progressive policies, which create conditions for economic growth and maximize the populations' happiness quotient.[58]

Kautilya's treatise is designed as prescriptive advice for a king who rules a state, which is akin to a modern regional power. Kautilya identifies this king using the ambitious term *Vijigishu* or "the would-be conqueror" whose area of operations lies between the "Himalayas and the sea."[59] Kautilya limits the *Vijigishu* to subcontinental India and any extension of the empire beyond the Indian subcontinent "was regarded as [an] unjust [expansion]."[60]

In the *Arthaśāstra*, Kautilya uses the Sanskrit term *Danda Niti* to explain the science of governance. For Kautilya governance implies making acquisitions, securing these acquisitions, further improving these acquisitions, and distributing the profits

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[57] Shamasastry, 14. Although Shamasastry translates the three goals of human endeavor as charity, wealth, and desire; other scholars have predominantly used *dharma*(ethics), *artha* (wealth), and *kama* (sensual pleasure) to refer to these goals: Liebig, 5; Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra,* 24; Kangle, Part III, 5.

[58] More, 17-18.

[59] Kangle, Part III, 2-3.

[60] Kangle, Part III, 2-3; Rangarajan, Kindle location 9324-9328.

thereof. The absence of governance leads to disorder or anarchy, which Kautilya terms

Matsya-Nyaya.[61]

<p style="text-align:center">Contract Theory–Society and Government</p>

Kautilya's concept of *Matsya-Nyaya* (anarchy) refers to a power struggle both

within the state and externally with other states; the internal social disorder of a state

leads to a contractual relationship between society and government.[62] Liebig explains that

a state of anarchy creates a social need for effective governance with the power of *Danda*

(punishment). In return for effective governance and an end to disorder, society willingly

pays taxes and adopts a contract with the King to govern the state.[63]

The King of the Kautilyan state is not an absolute monarch. Kautilya bound the

King in an implicit social contract to ensure social welfare, internal stability, and security

from external aggression.[64] Rangarajan defines the King's contract with society as a

three-fold obligation i.e., *Rakshana* (protection of the state and subjects), *Palana*

(administration of the state), and *Yogakshema* (welfare of the population).[65]

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[61] Kangle, Part III, 120; Kangle, Part II, 10; Coetzee explains *matsya-nyaya* as a state of disorder in a pond, wherein big fish eat the small fish, Coetzee, 77.

[62] Kangle, Part II, 10; Benoy Kumar Sarkar, "Hindu Theory of International Relations," *The American Political Science Review* 13, no. 3 (August 1919): 408, accessed December 30, 2015, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1945958.

[63] Liebig, 5.

[64] More, 19.

[65] Rangarajan, Kindle location 2216.

Keeping in context the *Matsya-Nyaya* theory and the contract between the society

with the King, Kautilya discusses the *Prakṛti* or constituent elements of a state. Liebig

argues that Kautilya's treatise focuses on measuring, optimizing, and enhancing the seven

Prakṛti (constituent elements of the state) in order to increase the state's power.[66]

<div align="center">

Kautilya's *Prakṛti* (Constituent Elements of State)
and National Power

</div>

Kautilya identifies seven elements of sovereignty as (1) the King, (2) the council

of ministers and high officials of the state, who represent the institutions, (3) the territory

with the inhabiting population of the state, (4) the fortified cities (5) the country's

treasury, (6) the country's forces and army, and (7) the allies.[67] Kautilya characterizes

these seven elements as the "limb-like elements of sovereignty."[68]

Scholars use different terms to describe the aforementioned seven elements.

Shamasastry associates the seven elements with the word *Prakṛti* and includes an eighth

element–the enemy.[69] Kangle translates the *Prakṛti* as the "constituent elements [of the

state],"Rangarajan terms them as the "seven constituent elements of any state," and

Modelski terms them the "the 'elements' of the state (*anga* or *Prakṛti*)." [70] For

harmonizing the contents of this paper, Kautilya's sovereign state consists of seven limb-

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[66] Liebig, 9-12.

[67] Kangle, Part II, 314; Kangle, Part III, 127; Shamasastry, 319; Rangarajan, Kindle location 2192.

[68] Shamasastry, 321.

[69] Ibid., xiv.

[70] Kangle, Part II, 314; Rangarajan, Kindle location 2192-2196; Modelski, 551.

like constituent elements (*Prakṛti* or *anga*) (see figure 4) which are subordinate to the King or leadership. The enemy is an inimical element, which adversely affects a sovereign state.
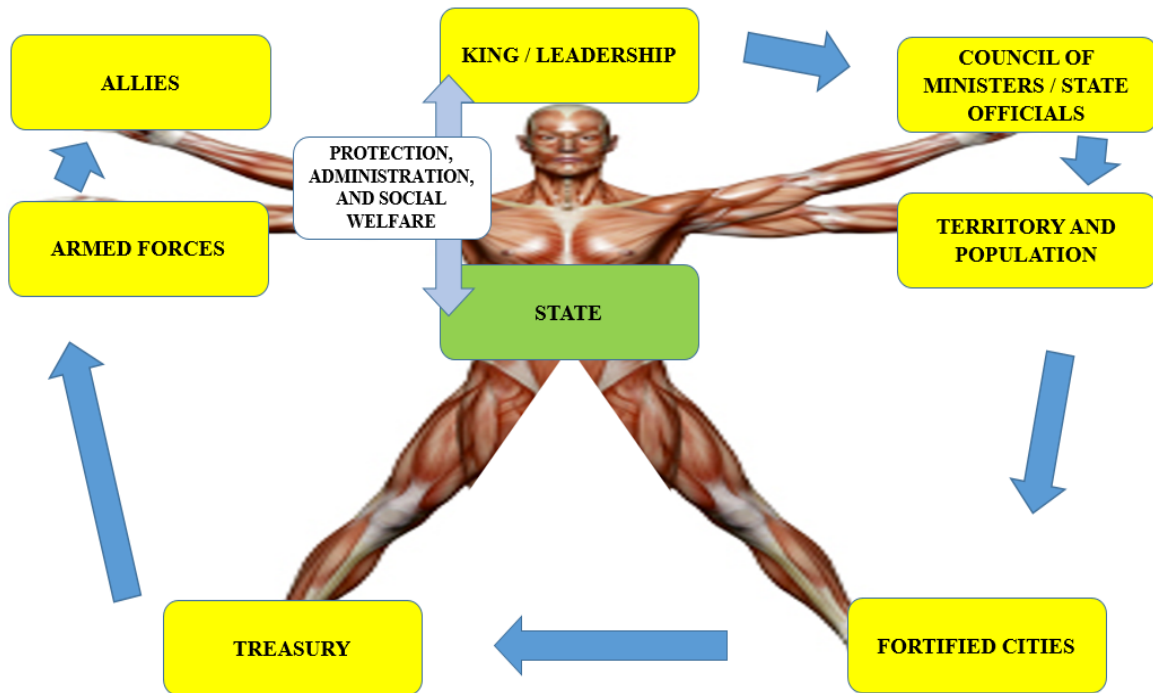
Figure 4.   The seven constituent elements of state (seven *Prakṛti* or *Anga*)
Source: Created by author.

In his treatise, Kautilya identifies the ideal qualities and relative importance of each *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of the state), wherein the King is the most important *Prakṛti* of the state. Kautilya considers the internal constituent elements to be more reliable compared to the external element i.e., the allies. Kautilya arranges these *Prakṛti*

in a *descending* order of importance, and supports his prioritization of the constituent

elements by comparing the relative effects of "dangers or calamities" on each of them.[71]

Kautilya warns the King to guard against *Vyasana* (dangers or calamities), which

could weaken the seven *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of the state). The source of these

calamities could be found in policy failures, human activities, or simply misfortune.

These calamities include lack of ideal characteristics of any of the constituents, absence

of an entire constituent element, a significant defect in any of the elements, personal

vices, and natural calamities.[72] Kautilya's concept of *Prakṛti* is analogous to the

contemporary concept of national power.

Modern scholars compare Kautilya's concept of the constituent elements of state

to the contemporary concept of national power. Modelski finds Kautilya's concept of

Prakṛti (constituent elements of state) as being a "part" of the modern idea of "elements

of national power."[73] Liebig argues that Kautilya's concept of a "state's seven state

factors is homologous with Morgenthau's concept of 'national power' whose components

are the geographical setting, population size, raw materials, agriculture, industrial

potential and the armed forces of a state."[74] Apart from the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements

of the state), Kautilya also discusses certain types of power, which are analogous to the

modern concept of relative power among states.

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[71] Rangarajan, Kindle location 2293-2302, 2387-2388; Modelski, 551; Liebig, 8; More, 21; Shamastry, 394; Kangle, 127.

[72] Shamasatry, 391-394; Rangarajan, 2307-2320.

[73] Modelski, 551.

[74] Liebig, 10.

Kautilya's Concept of Relative Power and
Objectives of State Policy

Kautilya defines three kinds of power, which function within a state. Shamasastry translates these three powers as "[the] power of deliberation [which] is [the] intellectual strength; the possession of a prosperous treasury and a strong army [which] is the strength of sovereignty; and martial power [which] is [the] physical strength."[75] Kangle identifies the sequential order of importance of these three kinds of powers as (1) power of diplomacy, (2) power of army and treasury, and (3) the King's energy or drive.[76] Modelski identifies the three components of a state's power as, "power of deliberation or decision making, including capacity for intrigue; the treasury and the army; and resolve and determination."[77] Other scholars classify the state's powers under three broad headings, "[the] energy and drive of the ruler," "the power of army and treasury," and "the power of counsel and diplomacy."[78]

Different interpretations exist regarding Kautilya's aforementioned categorisation of a state's power and the previously discussed concept of *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state). Liebig argues that "state power is the aggregate of the seven state factors [*Prakṛti*]."[79] Kangle argues that Kautilya associates the three types of powers with the

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[75] Shamasastry, 324.

[76] Kangle, Part III, 128-129.

[77] Modelski, 551.

[78] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra*, 29; Coetzee, 79.

[79] Liebig, 8.

study of interstate relations and not the "internal structure [*Prakṛti*]" of a state.[80]

Modelski relates Kautilya's three kinds of power as the "activity and application of the [constituent] elements of state."[81] This paper will interpret Kautilya's three types of powers as Kautilya's concept of prioritizing and measuring inter-state relative power (see figure 5), which in turn is a result of the application of each state's constituent elements (*Prakṛti*).

The Kautilyan state's policies pursue both power and happiness leading to the state's increasing progress. Kautilya notes that a state's policies could also lead to stagnation, or decline of the state (see figure 6).[82] He also argues that the subjects' happiness is paramount and drives the state's policies.[83] Modelski relates Kautilya's concept of happiness to the "measure of success of foreign policy and the implementation of its [foreign policy's] objectives", "righteousness", and "internal stability."[84] Kautilya encourages adoption of those policies which lead the *Vijigishu*'s state on a path of progress, strength, and happiness while causing the enemy state's decline.

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[80] Kangle, Part III, 128-129.

[81] Modelski, 551.

[82] Shamasastry, 328.

[83] Ibid., 44.

[84] Modelski, 551.
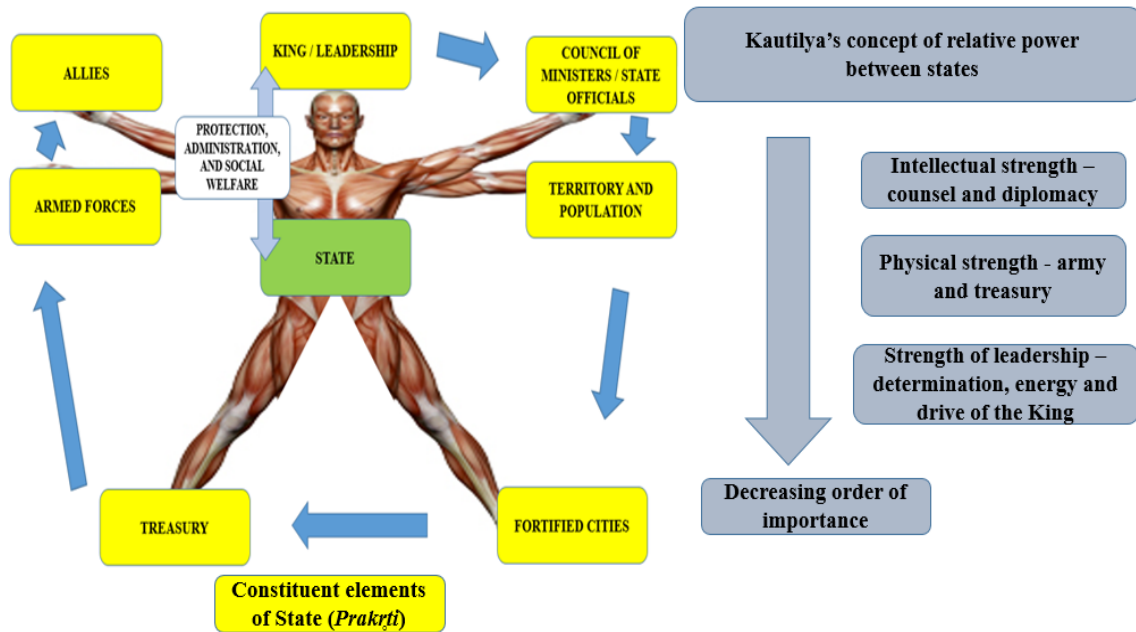
Figure 5.   Kautilya's concept of relative power

Source: Created by author.
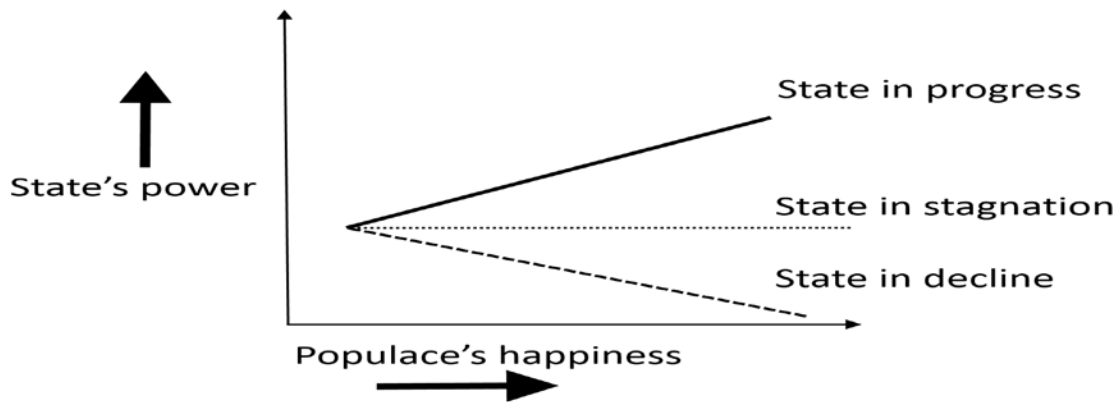
Figure 6.   Depiction of Kautilya's concept of a state's progress, stagnation or decline

Source: Created by author.

The pursuit of power and happiness is interlinked with the state's international standing; power and "happiness" serve as the "twin determinants of status [of a king or

state] in international society."[85] Kautilya exhorts the king to strive towards enhancing his state's power and happiness quotient while simultaneously contributing towards the enemy state's decline.[86] The objective of state policies, the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state), and the Kautilyan concept of state power together provide a suitable jumping-off point for studying Kautilya's approach towards foreign policy.

Kautilyan Foreign Policy

Kautilya views the 'normal' state of international relations as that of anarchy or *Matsya-Nyaya,* and his objectives of foreign policy include the pursuit of "happiness" and power.[87] Rangarajan distills the guiding principles of Kautilyan foreign policy as:

> (i) a King shall develop his state, i.e. augment its resources and power in order to enable him to embark on a campaign of conquest;
>
> (ii) the enemy shall be eliminated;
>
> (iii) those who help are friends;
>
> (iv) a prudent course shall always be adopted;
>
> (v) peace is to be preferred to war; and
>
> (vi) a King's behavior, in victory and in defeat, must be just.[88]

Kautilya bases the choice of foreign policy upon the difference in relative power between the states. The policy used by a *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) towards a

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[85] Modelski, 551; In his treatise, Kautilya states that the quantum of power and happiness possessed by a King, dictates the degree of superiority of that king. Shamasastry, 324; Rangarajan, Kindle location 9680-9693.

[86] Shamasastry, 324-328.

[87] Coetzee, 77.

[88] Rangarajan, Kindle location 9400-9409.

weaker king are different from those used for a superior king. Modelski argues that

Kautilya analyzes the foreign policy options from a superior-inferior or an inferior-

superior perspective, however treatment of policy options for "equal powers" is limited.[89]

The *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) may design his external policy framework

with active or passive methods using strategies aimed at consolidation or expansion of his

kingdom. The king's relative progress compared to his enemy indicates a successful

policy. The king's choice of policies may also result in a continuation of the balance of

power among the states or a decline of the *Vijigishu's* (the would-be conqueror) state.[90]

The theory of *Mandala* is Kautilya's solution for anarchy in the international

order.[91] Keeping in perspective the concepts of the constituent elements of a state, state

aspirations for growth, and the turbulent power struggle between the states, the

Arthaśāstra propounded his theory of foreign policy called the *Raj* (King's)-*Mandala*

(circle), more frequently called the circle of 12 states or the *Mandala*.[92]

Mandala (circle of states) theory

Kautilya classifies the relationships between the *Vijigishu* and other states as (see

figure 7) those with an enemy, friend of *Vijigishu*, friend of the enemy, friend of the

Vijigishu's friend, and friend of the enemy's friend. Towards the geographical rear of the

Vijigishu (the would-be conqueror) are the rearward enemy, rearward friend, friend of the

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[89] Modelski, 552.

[90] Rangarajan, Kindle location 9552-9562, 9517-9522.

[91] Sarkar, 408.

[92] More, 25.

enemy in the rear, and friend of the friend in rear. The intermediary or middle king and the neutral king complete this circle of states.[93]

The middle king's state adjoins the country of the *Vijigishu* and his enemy, more importantly, the middle king is more powerful than either of them. The neutral king's state is geographically farther away, however, he is superior and more powerful than the middle king.[94] Kautilya's *Raj Mandala* (see figure 7) or the circle of states can be depicted as interlinked circles of states, wherein, each state has seven constituent elements of states.[95] This paper's depiction of the circle of states in figure 7 marks enemy states in red, friendly states in blue, neutral states as green, and Kautilya's middle king in orange.

To aid the *Vijigishu*'s thought process in choosing strategic policy options, Kautilya discusses four stratagems (*Upayas*) and six foreign policy options (*Sadgunya*). Modelski terms the *Upayas* (stratagems) as "influencing techniques" which can be applied to both domestic and foreign policies.[96] The *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) controls his circle of states by using four stratagems (*Upayas*) i.e., conciliation (*Sama*), placating with gifts (*Dana*), sowing dissension (*Bheda*), or force (*Danda*). The strategy for controlling weaker states uses conciliation and placating with gifts. The strategy for influencing stronger states, however, focuses on the creation of dissension (*Bheda*) or

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[93] Rangarajan, 9595-9682.

[94] Rangarajan, 9664-9666; More, 25-26.

[95] Rangarajan, 9640-9646.

[96] Modelski, 553.

application of force (*Danda*).[97] The six-fold policies and stratagems are not equally developed in Kautilya's work. In contrast to the six-fold policies (*Sadgunya*), Kautilya does not study the four stratagems in a systematic manner.
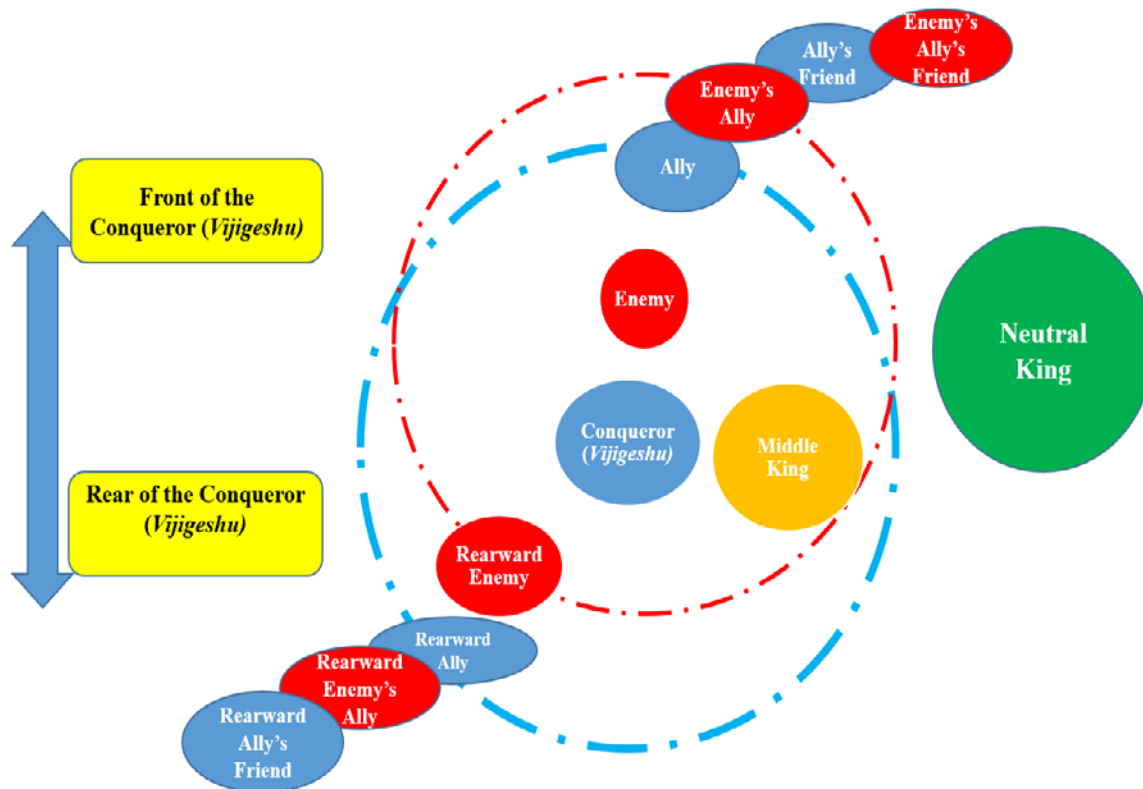
Figure 7.   Kautilya's *Raj Mandala* or the circle of states

Source: Created by author.

Although the treatise does not address the four stratagems in depth, modern scholars such as Hans J. Morgenthau have discussed similar concepts in their works. While identifying the similarity of ideas between Kautilya's four stratagems and the

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[97] Rangarajan, Kindle location 10686-10691; Shamasastry, 84.

writing of Morgenthau on the balance of power, Gautam notes the absence of references for Kautilya's treatise in the latter work.[98]

Having provided a construct for viewing interstate relations i.e. the *Mandala*, Kautilya states that the "circle of states, is the source of the six-fold policy [*Sadgunya*]."[99] Within the circle of states, the *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) uses Kautilya's six-fold policy as a foreign policy tool for ensuring peace, expanding his power, and ensuring progress of his state.[100]

Kautilya's *Sadgunya* (the Six-fold Policy)

Kautilya uses the *Sadgunya* (the six-fold policy) as the "backbone" of *Arthaśāstra*'s foreign policy analysis.[101] Kautilya specifies six different forms of foreign policy i.e.., (1) *Samdhi* (policy of peace), (2) *Vigraha* (policy of hostility or war), (3) *Asana* (policy of staying quiet), (4) *Yana* (preparing for war), (5) *Samsraya* (policy of seeking shelter with another king or in a fort), and (6) *Dvaidhibhava* (the double policy of *peace* with one king and hostility or war with another).[102] Sachin More associates the six-fold or *Sadgunya* policy to a war-peace continuum (see figure 8).[103] Sachin More's depiction of Kautilya's six fold policy shows the similarity of Kautilya's doctrine to the

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[98] Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra*, 52.

[99] Shamasastry, 327.

[100] Shamasastry, 330; Rangarajan, Kindle location 9452-9456.

[101] Modelski, 553.

[102] Shamasastry, 327; Gautam, 53-54; Modelski 552.

[103] More, 29.

conflict continuum of the contemporary range of military operations in United States

joint doctrine (see figure 9).
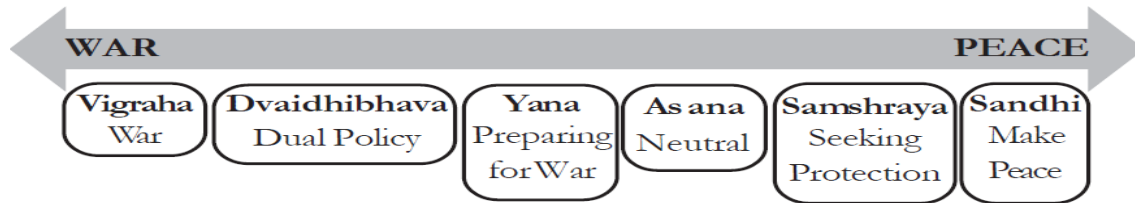
Figure 8.   Kautilya's six fold (*Sadgunya*) policy

Source: Sachin More, IDSA Monograph Series, vol. 31, *Arthasastra: Lessons for the Contemporary Security Environment with South Asia as a Case Study* (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, 2014), 29, accessed March 6, 2016, http://www.idsa.in/system/files/Monograph31.pdf.

Figure 9.   Range of military operations

Source: Joint Chiefs of Staff, Joint Publication 3-0, *Joint Operations* (Washington, DC: Government Printing Office, 2011), I-5, accessed March 6, 2016, http://www.dtic.mil/ doctrine/new_pubs/jp3_0.pdf.

Kautilya's policy of *Sandhi* or peace, considers peace as an enabling period for

the *Vijigishu* (a would-be conqueror) to build up his power before attempting to conquer

the enemy.[104] Kautilya's policy of peace (*Sandhi*) aims at the progress of the *Vijigishu*'s

state, strengthening alliances, awaiting a favorable opportunity to conquer the enemy, and

as part of a dual policy.[105] Within this policy option, Kautilya specifies different types of

peace treaties to suit the relative power status of the king.

Kautilya's options for negotiating peace treaties use offers of territory, wealth,

and military hostages. Modelski notes Kautilya's ability to distinguish different types of

"unequal political cooperation" as a phase of continuous power struggle between

states.[106] Kautilya's options for economic and territorial peace treaties (see figure 10)

may provide ideas for settling contemporary geo-political disputes.

Kautilya does not limit the policy of war (*Vigraha*) to physical conflicts alone.

Kautilya classifies war into four categories: diplomatic offensive measures

(*Mantrayuddha*), an open war at a designated time and place (*Prakasayuddha*), a secret

war i.e. using treachery and psychological warfare to surprise the enemy (*Kutayuddha*),

and an undeclared war i.e. using clandestine methods, assassinations, and secret agents

(*Gudayuddha*).[107] The treatise talks about breaking up confederacies and oligarchies by

sowing dissension using "undeclared war."[108] Kautilya's principles indicate his clarity of

thought for consolidating the capture of territories and creating an enduring victory.

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[104] Rangarajan, Kindle location 9548-9549

[105] Ibid., location 9457-9462.

[106] Modelski, 552.

[107] Rangarajan, Kindle location 11973- 11979.

[108] Ibid., location 11542-11544.

Treaties involving economic tributes.

- **Treaty involving offer of one tribute (*Parikrayasandhi*)** – Offer to pay off the superior king by giving one monetary tribute, while other elements of the state remain free.
- **Treaty involving payment in tributes (*Upagrahasandhi*)** – Paying the superior king in multiple instalments termed as "tributes".
- **Treaty involving an excessive payment (*Kapálasandhi*)** – Payment of an excessive amount to the superior king, rendering the weaker king as a pauper.
- **"Golden peace" (*Suvarnasandhi*)** – Payment of a reasonable amount which promotes mutual trust and unity among the two kings.

Treaties ceding territory or leasing produce

- **"Treaty of cession" (*Ádishtasandhi*)** - Cession of a part of the kingdom to the "superior" king. This part of the territory is usually infested with thefts and secret agents.
- **"Scorched earth" treaty (*Uchchhinnasandhi*)**- Cession of whole of the kingdom except the capital to the "superior" king. The whole territory is impoverished and removed of any useful wealth or assets.
- **"Lease" treaty (*Avakrayasandhi*)** -Treaty involving handing over produce of the land as a "rent" to the "superior" king.
- **"Ruinous" treaty (*Paribhúshana*)** -Treaty involving handing over more produce than the land yields to the "superior" king.

Figure 10. Peace treaty (*Sandhi*) options for a weaker king

Source: Created by author. The figure uses terms quoted from Kauṭilya, *The Arthashastra,* trans. L. N. Rangarajan (New Delhi: Penguin Books India, 1992), Kindle location 10388-10528; Kautilya, *Kauṭilya's Arthaśāstra,* trans. R. Shamasastry (Bangalore: Government Press, 1915), accessed November 3, 2015, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=umn.31951p009966161;view=1up;seq=7., 334-336; George Modelski, "Kautilya: Foreign Policy and International System in the Ancient Hindu World," *The American Political Science Review* 58, no. 3 (September 1964): 552, accessed March 6, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/1953131.

Having conquered a territory Kautilya advises the *Vijigishu* to follow policies, which focus on the welfare of the conquered population and endeavor towards earning the populace's respect and trust, as well as loyalty. Kautilya advises the *Vijigishu* to "adopt the way of life, dress, language and customs of the people . . . show the same devotion to the gods of the territory . . . and participate in the people's festivals and amusements."[109] Kautilya insisists on the *Vijigishu* giving honorable treatment to the

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[109] Rangarajan, Kindle location 13149-13162.

vanquished king, the king's family, and to loyal vassals.[110] Apart from the policies of war

and peace, Kautilya also explores other strategic options in his treatise.

Kautilya favors adopting a double policy of peace with one king and hostility with

another (*Dvaidhibhava*) in comparison to a policy of seeking alliances. Scholars view

Kautilya's *Dvaidhibhava* (dual policy of peace and hostility) as an overt friendship with

one state and covert destruction of another.[111] Kautilya argues that in a double policy, a

king can focus on his state's growth, while benefiting from an ally's support. However, in

an alliance, allies focus on helping each other, instead of focusing on their own self-

interest and growth.[112] Hence, Kautilya considers a double policy to be more beneficial

than an alliance. His policy of *Asana* (staying quiet) resembles a strategic wait and watch

policy.

The policy of staying quiet (*Asana*) is essentially a "pause in implementing [an

ongoing] policy of peace or war."[113] In using this policy, the state either deliberately

chooses not to act or waits for a favorable opportunity. Since a pause after mobilizing for

war drains the treasury, Kautilya takes up a substantial portion of his treatise to examine

the incumbent factors before declaring war.[114] Kautilya's prescriptive advice for the

Vijigishu (would-be conqueror) is not designed for a strong regional power alone.

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[110] Rangarajan, Kindle location 10547-10548.

[111] Coates and Caton, 12-13.

[112] Shamasastry, 331.

[113] Rangarajan, Kindle location 9471-9484.

[114] Ibid., location 9471-9484.

Kautilya proffers detailed advice to a weaker *Vijigishu* as he faces a stronger

conqueror. Kautilya first differentiates the nature of the conqueror and then uses the four

stratagems (*Upayas*) to advise the weaker king on various policy choices.

<center>Kautilya's Analysis of Conquerors and Strategic Choices
for a Weaker King</center>

Kautilya explains three kinds of conquerors in his treatise- the "righteous", the

"greedy", and the "demoniacal".[115] The righteous conqueror aims to secure submission of

the defeated king in an ethical conquest. The greedy conqueror, on the other hand, seizes

the state's territory, resources, and wealth. The demoniacal conqueror "is satisfied only

with the seizure of land, goods, sons, wives and life."[116]

The character of the aggressor i.e. righteous, greedy, or demonical shapes the

weaker king's attitude towards the aggressor. Kautilya advises the weaker king to submit

to the righteous conqueror, submit monetarily to the greedy conqueror, and take counter-

steps for survival against a demoniacal conqueror.[117] Coetzee notes that Kautilya

preaches the concept of "strategic flexibility" for the weaker king.[118] Notwithstanding the

aggressor's attitude, Kautilya advises the weaker king to fight only if the conditions for

securing peace do not exist. He also advises against both "spineless submission and

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[115] Kangle, Part II, 460; Gautam, *One Hundred Years of Kautilya's Arthasastra,*
56-57.

[116] Kangle, Part II, 460.

[117] Rangarajan, Kindle location 11656-11696.

[118] Coetzee, 77.

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foolhardy valour" when a weaker king is under attack by a stronger king.[119] The weaker

king should seek shelter either with a superior king or in an impregnable fort. Apart from

seeking shelter, Kautilya advises the weaker king to preempt the attacker by using peace

overtures, offensive diplomatic maneuvers or concealed warfare.[120]

In this section of the paper, a review of literature on the *Arthaśāstra* set out the

concepts of Kautilya's doctrine on statecraft. These concepts include the constituent

elements of a state, the idea of state power, objectives of state policy, the theory of the

circle of states, the six-fold policy of international relations, and the four stratagems

(*Upayas*). The review of literature indicated that Kautilya's concepts of the constituent

elements of a state and six-fold policy are similar to the contemporary concepts of

national power and range of military operations. Despite Kautilya's relative lack of

visibility among strategists in comparison to Sun Tzu or Clausewitz, scholars have

endeavored to identify Kautilya's contemporary relevance. The next section provides an

overview of some of these works.

Works Examining Kautilya's Contemporary Relevance

In his monograph, Sachin More applies Kautilya's concepts to Pakistan as a case

study. Considering Pakistan as a *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror), he assesses

Pakistan's strategic policy choices. Using Kautilya's categories of warfare, Sachin also

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[119] Rangarajan, Kindle location 11664.

[120] Kangle, 461-478.

describes Pakistan's strategy of using both covert and silent warfare against India in a pursuit for power.[121]

Sachin More asserts that Pakistan has been unable to strengthen the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements) of the state as per Kautilya's priority. Sachin More analyses the weaknesses of Pakistan's *Prakṛti* and attributes them to Pakistan's weaknesses in leadership and government institutions, which in turn have adversely affected the "the very idea of its [Pakistan's] statehood."[122] Sachin More concludes that the *Arthaśāstra* assists in not only "analyzing and interpreting the ideal set of state policies, but also the flawed state policies and perceptions."[123]

In another monograph, Gautam uses concepts from *Arthaśāstra* to explain modern geo-political events. He uses the concepts of *Prakṛti* (constituent elements), *Vyasana* (calamity), and *Bhumisandhi* (treaty for acquiring land) for explaining the ceasefire in the Indo-Pakistan conflict of 1947-48 and the unilateral withdrawal of China from the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh in 1962.[124] Gautam argues that the inhospitable terrain and a potentially hostile population influenced India's decision not to recapture Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (POK) in 1947-48.[125] India's strategic choice of avoiding a protracted

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[121] More, 64.

[122] Ibid, 64-65.

[123] Ibid., 65.

[124] P. K. Gautam, IDSA monograph series vol. 47, *Kautilya's Arthashastra: Contemporary Issues and Comparison*, (New Delhi: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses, October 2015), 4-12, accessed March 6, 2016, http://idsa.in/monograph/ kautilyas_Arthashastra_contemporary_issues_and_comparison.

[125] Ibid., 15-20.

guerilla warfare is in line with Kautilya's concept of *Bhumisandhi* (treaty for acquiring land) which prescribes against the occupation of *unmanageable* land. Apart from the terrain and population, the Indian armed forces faced logistic problems which Gautam associates to Kautilya's concept of a *Vyasana* (calamity).[126] Gautam similarly assesses China's decision in 1962 to unilaterally withdraw from India due to overextension of the Chinese Army and the ungovernable nature of the hostile Indian population in Arunachal Pradesh.[127]

This section of the literature review answered the secondary research question concerning the key elements of Kautilya's strategic thought in the *Arthaśāstra*. The review identified the concepts of a social contract, *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state), relative power among states, *Mandala* (circle of states) theory, and Kautilya's *Sadgunya* (six fold foreign policy). Having identified and studied the primary and secondary sources of literature on the *Arthaśāstra*, the literature review will now turn to contemporary strategic thought about the concept of national power in an international system.

The Contemporary State in an International Environment

This portion of the literature review will endeavor to identify and study contemporary concepts behind a state, constituent elements of national power, concepts about international relations, and other strategic theories.

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[126] Ibid., 18-20.

[127] Ibid., 20-23.

The state of nature and social contract theories provide a contemporary framework for the idea of a state. The state of nature theory proposes a hypothetical natural situation in which humanity existed prior to the institution of some form of government. In explaining Thomas Hobbes' state of nature concept, Evangelia Sembou writes that all humans possess equal "faculties of both body and mind" and are prone to conflicts due to a common human desire for self-preservation.[128] Another scholar argues that human beings "struggle against dominance itself [while simultaneously struggling] to become as dominant as one can."[129] The concept of state of nature is applicable to both individual human beings and individual states.

In analyzing Immanuel Kant's works, a contemporary scholar explains that "in the state of nature conflict and violence reign[s]" between states and among human beings.[130] Another contemporary scholar argues that while government prevents society from deteriorating into a state of anarchy, a "world government" could potentially prevent wars between states.[131] This brief explanation of the domestic and international dimensions of the state of nature theory, leads us to the social contract theory.

In Thomas D. Davis's examination of Hobbes' idea of a "social contract," people avoid the state of nature, by agreeing "to a set of rules" and consenting to the

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[128] Evangelia Sembou, *Modern Theories of Politics* (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2013), 10, accessed May 19, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[129] William A. Edmundson, "Politics in a State of Nature," *Ratio Juris* 26, no. 2 (June 2013): 182, accessed May 18, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/raju.12009.

[130] Kenneth N. Waltz, *Man, the State, and War: A Theoretical Analysis* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), 163.

[131] Ibid., 227-228.

establishment of a government to "enforce those rules."[132] Amplifying upon Jean-Jacques

Rousseau's work, Sembou writes that the rule of law preserves this social contract.[133]

Sembou argues that irrespective of the type of government, any state "governed by law"

fits Rousseau's idea of a "republic".[134] From Rousseau's idea of a republic, this paper

moves to contemporary views about a state.

Martin L. Van Creveld argues that a state is simply a form of "organization of

government" which emerged as an "instrument for imposing law and order on groups and

people"[135] With the advent of the idea of nationalism, the concept of a state changed from

being an instrument to becoming an end.[136] Van Creveld argues that a modern state

exhibits three characteristics i.e. of "being sovereign," "being territorial," and being "an

abstract organization."[137] As an abstract organization, the state is not identifiable with

"either rulers or ruled," the modern state exhibits an "independent persona."[138] The

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[132] Thomas D. Davis, *Contemporary Moral and Social Issues: An Introduction through Original Fiction, Discussion, and Readings* (UK: Wiley Blackwell, 2014), 68, accessed May 19, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[133] Sembou, 148.

[134] Ibid.

[135] Martin L. Van Creveld, *The Rise and Decline of the State* (Cambridge England: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 415.

[136] Ibid., 259.

[137] Ibid., 416.

[138] Ibid.

modern nationalistic state uses science and technology for "combating other states" and strengthening internal control over the state's territory and the population.[139]

The contemporary concept of state also exhibits a system of checks and balances to avoid a tyrannical rule due to a concentration of power. Perhaps the best case in point is the American constitution, which mandates the creation of a "*strong central government* [italics added] led by a single-person executive, a strong legislature with countervailing powers, and a national judiciary."[140]

The state of nature and social contract theories corroborate the idea that society chooses a peaceful and stable social order by consenting to governance based on the rule of law. Governance prevents a state of chaotic social disorder or anarchy. Left in a state of nature, the international system of states also faces inevitable conflict and chaos unless the states choose some form of an order by observing certain broadly accepted norms.

The modern concept of inter-state interactions rests more on the idea of self-determination than on universalism.[141] The concept of self-determination argues that nations are free to self-determine their own set of rules of governance and use their

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[139] Creveld, 260.

[140] Marybeth P. Ulrich, "American Values, Interests, and Purpose: Perspectives on the Roots of American Political and Strategic Culture," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 2, *National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 8, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army .mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1110.

[141] D. Robert Worley, *Orchestrating the Instruments of Power: A Critical Examination of the U.S. National Security System* (Herndon, VA: Potomac Books, 2015), 14-15, accessed January 1, 2016. ProQuest ebrary.

"institutions of state" to enforce their domestic and foreign policies.[142] The alternative to

the concept of self-determination is universalism, which stands for holding nations and

people against a single set of rules. The principles of sovereignty and non-interference

stem from the concept of self-determination.[143] In such an international system of

sovereign states, the concept of national power is essential for understanding the inter-

state interactions.

<div align="center">National Power and the Security Dilemma</div>

Alan G. Stolberg argues that power in an international system is the "ability of an

actor or actors to *influence the behavior* [italics added] of other actors" to take actions

which are in congruence with the national interests of the influencer(s).[144] Scholars at

RAND define national power as a "country's capacity to pursue strategic goals through

purposeful action."[145] Their model of national power has two dimensions, an external

dimension that displays the state's ability to influence the global environment and an

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[142] Ibid., 14.

[143] Worley, 14-15.

[144] Alan G. Stolberg, "The International System in the 21st Century," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 2, *National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 143, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1110.

[145] Ashley J. Tellis, Christopher Layne, and Janice L. Bially, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 44, accessed December 31, 2015, ProQuest ebrary.

internal dimension, which is the nation's capacity to convert its resources into "actionable

knowledge" or high quality civil-military technologies.[146]

In a globalized world, scholars consider the variables of the power equation to be

increasingly more dynamic, and relative to inter-state relations and the growing power of

non-state actors.[147] The contemporary framework of national power (see figure 11)

propounded by Ashley J. Tellis et al, comprises three realms: national resources, national

performance, and military capability.[148] National resources are the "building blocks,"

which enable a nation to dominate "cycles of innovation in the global economy and

increase its hegemonic potential."[149] National performance analyzes a country's capacity

to convert the latent power of national resources into tangible usable power. The state's

military capability, which is the "first line of defense" against competitors in an

"anarchic" system of international politics, forms the third realm of national power.[150]

Scholars assert that political will and the populace's domestic support for the government

both play a key role in conversion of a state's latent power into an operational reality.[151]

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[146] Ibid., 45.

[147] R. Craig Nation, "National Power," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 2, *National Security Policy and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 154-155, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudies institute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1110.

[148] Tellis. Layne, and Bially, 45.

[149] Ibid., 45-46.

[150] Ibid., 47-48.

[151] Nation, 155-156.

Tellis et al argue that their framework for assessing national power is intensive, inclusive, and cohesive in nature.[152] Compared to other models, this framework includes a larger number of variables, incorporates a dynamic state-societal relationship, and factors in a state's responsiveness to external stimuli.[153]

RAND *MR1110A-3*

National resources

Technology
Enterprise
Human resources
Financial/capital resources
Physical resources

National performance

External constraints
Infrastructural capacity
Ideational resources

Military capability

$$\underset{\text{Strategic resources}}{} + \underset{\text{Conversion capability}}{} = \underset{\text{Combat proficiency}}{}$$

Figure 3—A Revised View of National Power

Figure 11. A contemporary framework of national power

Source: Ashley J. Tellis, Christopher Layne, and Janice L. Bially, *Measuring National Power in the Postindustrial Age* (Santa Monica, California: RAND Corporation, 2000), 45, accessed December 31, 2015, ProQuest ebrary.

Ronald L. Tammen et al. corroborate the view that the state's power is a dynamic entity. They argue that national capability measurement models based on "demographic, economic, and military components . . . [allow relational ranking among states] but fail to

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[152] Tellis. Layne, and Bially, 45-48.

[153] Ibid.

capture the dynamics of power change."[154] Tammen et al. identify three subcomponents of a state's power i.e.., the population, the populations' economic productivity, and political capability in terms of "extracting and pooling individual contributions to advance national goals."[155] Each subcomponent of a state's power has a "different timing impact" on the state's power.[156] Population, being a relatively static aspect, has a short-term impact on a state's power, while economic growth is more dynamic and hence affects power in the medium term. In comparison, political capability being most volatile, affects power in a short term.[157] The accretion and use of power also creates a security dilemma in the international system.

The security dilemma refers to the nations' constant dilemma with regard to their level of military power and security. Nations invite aggression if they are either too weak or very threatening in the international system. In the first case, nations fail to maintain a level of military power, which can guarantee national security. In the second case, nations create so much military power that they start an arms race. A complicating aspect is the fact that defense technology serves dual purposes, hence defensive systems may also be used for offensive purposes.[158] The idealist and realist schools of thought on international relations offer different perceptions and solutions about power and the security dilemma.

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[154] Ronald L. Tammen et al., *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21st Century* (New York: Chatham House Publishers, 2000), 16.

[155] Tammen et al., 8.

[156] Ibid., 15.

[157] Ibid., 15-16.

[158] Worley, 14.

The idealists' solution to the security dilemma is through a refined system of international cooperation through interlocked international institutions. Idealists argue that democratic states promote peace, while non-democratic states promote war. Idealists reject the use of force as well as aggression and argue that if states keep arms at a minimum level for self-defense, avoiding an arms race is possible.[159] Idealists believe that inter-state interactions are "mutual-benefit games" which produce positive outcomes for all stakeholders.[160]

The realists' view inter-state relations as "zero-sum games: for one to gain, another must lose" and the solution for the security dilemma is through a "balance of power" among the states.[161] Realists believe that conflict between sovereign states is inevitable, and survival in an anarchic international environment mandates an accretion of power. The "offensive" school of realism looks upon states as "power maximizers" while the "defensive" school of realism considers states to be "security maximizers", wherein states should acquire a capability to deter, and if needed defeat, an attacker.[162] Having reviewed the realists' and idealists' schools of thought on the security dilemma, the next section will examine theories on power in the international system.

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[159] Worley, 21-22.

[160] Ibid., 21.

[161] Ibid., 17-18.

[162] Ibid., 19.

Theories of Power in the International System

The theory of balance of power refers to the equilibrium of power in the international system of sovereign states, which prevents or opposes the rise of a "single dominant actor" and denies an actor the capability to dictate to any other actor.[163] This theory prevents the creation of a "universal empire" through conquest, protects weaker states from assimilation by a belligerent regional state, and permits states to work on advancing collective interests while maintaining their security.[164] In order to maintain a balance of power, states seek allies, form coalitions, and carry out "balancing and bandwagoning based on their assessment of their *relative power* [italics added] in the international system."[165]

Balancing and bandwagoning refer to the actions taken by a weaker state to oppose or join a stronger state or group of states. In case of an unacceptably powerful state, a weaker state carries out external and internal balancing in order to counter and offset the stronger state(s). External balancing actions may include formation of a coalition and alliances while internal balancing may include military aggrandizement. A weaker state participates in bandwagoning when it joins a stronger state or group of states instead of attempting to counter the stronger power(s). To induce weaker states to join

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[163] Stolberg, 142.

[164] Stolberg, 142; Richard Little, *The Balance of Power in International Relations: Metaphors, Myths, and Models* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 4.

[165] Stolberg, 142.

their folds, stronger states incentivize bandwagoning by offering geo-economic concessions or advantages.[166]

Scholars argue that an alliance's stability depends upon the commonality of interests of the participants and their mutual feelings of either satisfaction or dissatisfaction about the status quo of the international system. Therefore, alliances based on the notion that "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" are convenient but short term alliances.[167] Apart from the theory on balance of power, the theory on power transition also assists in studying power in the international system.

The power transition theory describes the international system of states as a global or regional power hierarchy, which is dominated by a "dominant state", below which exist the "great powers," "middle powers," and lastly the "small powers" (see figure 12).[168] Among the group of great powers, a challenger state is a state with 80 percent or more of the dominant state's power.[169]

A challenger state's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the existing international or regional power hierarchy, and the state's desire to improve its position in the power hierarchy provides the motivation for conflict or peace. The dissatisfied great power

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[166] Ibid., 141-142.

[167] Tammen et al., 14, 10.

[168] Ibid., 6-7.

[169] Ibid., 7-8.

state(s) challenge the unfair power hierarchy, while the dominant state defends the status quo of the international system.[170]
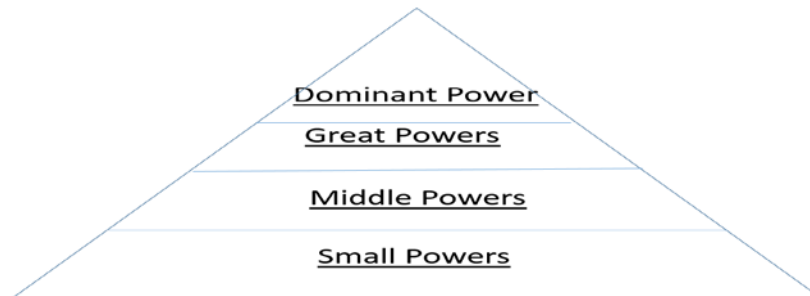
Figure 12. Classic Power Pyramid

Source: Ronald L. Tammen et al., *Power Transitions: Strategies for the 21st Century* (New York, NY: Chatham House Publishers, 2000), 7.

After reviewing theories on power, the next section addresses the causes of conflict in the international system.

Causes of Conflict between States

Scholars identify three dominant schools of thought on the root causes of war.[171] The first school of thought, studied earlier in this paper, considers the human pursuit of selfish interests to be the root cause of war. The second school considers a state's socio-economic and political structure to be the root cause of conflict i.e. democracy vs autocracy or capitalism vs socialism. The third school claims that since world order has no higher authority than sovereign states, "anarchy characterizes the system of states,"

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[170] Tammen et al., 9-10.

[171] Worley, 3-4.

thereby creating the necessity of war for a state's survival.[172] Tammen et al. also provide

an explanation for conflict.

Tammen et al. base their analysis of conflicts on the concepts of "parity" between

states and "overtaking" which occurs between the challenger and the dominant state.[173] A

great power becomes a potential challenger state and achieves a state of parity when it

develops more than "80 percent of the resources of the dominant state."[174] As a

challenger state keeps developing, it overtakes the dominant state due to a steep and

faster growth trajectory and this phase determines chances of a conflict.[175]

Satisfaction of both the challenger and the dominant-defender state(s) during the

parity-overtaking phase is crucial for the probability of conflict. A very high probability

of war exists in case both the challenger and defender are highly dissatisfied with the

change in status quo of the international order. In case both the states are satisfied with

the transition, there exists a low possibility of conflict, and in case only the challenger is

dissatisfied, the situation has a high probability of war.[176] States can also choose to

preempt or prevent a conflict.

Preemptive initiation of war occurs when an opponent's attack using existing

capability is imminent while preventive war, involves fighting a "winnable war now",

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[172] Ibid., 4.

[173] Tammen et al., 21.

[174] Ibid.

[175] Ibid.

[176] Ibid., 21-24.

rather than under unfavorable situations.[177] Motives for a preventive war may include a perception of one's declining military power vis-a-vis the adversary's growing power.[178]

Having looked at the theories on power and causes behind war, this part of the chapter looks at the application of power.

<u>Applying Power and Designing Strategy</u>

From an application perspective, contemporary scholars identify hard, soft, and smart categories of power. Hard power refers to a state's influence originating from coercive usage of military and economic capability of a state. On the other hand, soft power is the capability of an actor to influence other actor's actions through indirect means such as cultural and ideological attraction.[179] Apart from the components of hard and soft power, Joseph S. Nye identifies smart power as a "combination of hard and soft power."[180] Understanding and effectively using a state's instruments of power remains vital for applying the above categories of power.

Stolberg argues that "an actor's power is measured in terms of the ability to wield the *instruments of power* [italics added] that it [the state] actually possesses."[181]

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[177] Jack S. Levy, "Declining Power and the Preventive Motivation for War," *World Politics* 40, no. 1 (October 1987): 90, accessed March 6, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2010195.

[178] Worley, 9-12.

[179] Stolberg, 143-144.

[180] Joseph S. Nye, "Smart Power," *New Perspectives Quarterly* 26, no. 2 (March 2009): 7, accessed March 24, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/npqu.2009.26.issue-2.

[181] Stolberg, 144.

Measurement of a state's ability to wield these instruments is relative to the ability of other actors. American security scholars identify the instruments of power with the acronym DIME (Diplomacy, Information, Military, and Economic Power).[182] To utilize its power effectively in an international system, the state should have a viable strategy.

In formulating and designing strategy, H.Richard Yarger emphasizes that political purpose must drive all strategy; at the same time, strategy needs to be proactive and anticipatory.[183] Formulation of strategy requires a comprehensive view of the strategic environment and identification of the internal and external factors. Designing a viable strategy requires a clear picture of the end-state, maintaining an optimum balance between the ends-ways-means, and factoring in risk.[184] There are various strategies for applying force, which is one of the most visible applications of power.

Deterrence, coercion, and compellance are some of the well-known concepts for application of force.[185] Deterrence is to prevent action by an opponent by creating a fear of consequences; contemporary strategists view defensive measures and retaliation as a part of deterrence strategy. Compellance involves initiating an action, which forces an opponent to respond in a specific manner for the action to cease or be rendered harmless.

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[182] Ibid.

[183] H. Richard Yarger, "Toward a Theory of Strategy: Art Lykke and the U.S. Army War College Strategy Model," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 45-48, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pdffiles/ PUB1109.pdf.

[184] Ibid.

[185] Worley, 8; Stolberg, 144.

Coercion is more like arranging a bargain for an opponent wherein a threatened penalty forces him to take the desired action.[186] Force can also be applied in "counterforce" (against military forces) or "counter value" (against civilian populations or resources) options.[187] A contemporary inability to build enduring strategic success has enhanced the need of having a clear end state as well as a clear concept of victory.

Victory in a conflict is dependent upon the government's and the population's perception of the conflict. Information operations are critical in targeting and breaking the enemy's will while protecting one's own will. Weapons that provide a tactical victory at the cost of collateral damage, may eventually lead to a strategic loss.[188] As Bartholomees argues, "strategic victory must be a political state."[189] Therefore, the victor's populace must accept the change in political conditions with a sense of achievement; furthermore, the defeated populace should also accept the situation for better and lasting peace.[190]

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[186] Worley, 8-9.

[187] Ibid.

[188] J. Boone Bartholomees, Jr., "A Theory of Victory," in *U.S. Army War College Guide to National Security Issues*, 5th ed., vol. 1, *Theory of War and Strategy*, ed. J. Boone Bartholomees Jr. (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2012), 103-105, accessed March 24, 2016, http://www.strategicstudies institute.army.mil/pdffiles/PUB1109.pdf.

[189] Ibid., 104.

[190] Ibid., 104-105.

Having reviewed literature on contemporary strategic thought, relevant to the idea of national power and its application in an international environment, the next few paragraphs will summarize the concepts identified in this chapter.

Literature Review Summary

This chapter reviewed existing literature on the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought in the context of national power. The first part of this chapter sought answers to the secondary research question regarding the key elements of Kautilya's strategic thought as explained in the *Arthaśāstra*. The second part of this chapter addressed another secondary research question–what is contemporary strategic thought?

The review of literature about the *Arthaśāstra* indicated certain facts, scholarly debates, and trends regarding the treatise. The treatise comprises of 15 books and provides prescriptive advice for internal and external policies suitable for a progressive state. The three primary sources of literature identified for this paper are English translations of the treatise by Shamasastry, Kangle, and Rangarajan. Two main debates identified by this paper include terming Kautilya as the "Indian Machiavelli" and the authorship of the treatise. Since the term "Indian Machiavelli" undercuts the unique contribution by both Kautilya and Machiavelli, a majority of the scholars argue against using the term. A minority group of scholars also debate over the authorship and age of this treatise, while a large majority focus on the benefits of the *Arthaśāstra*. Despite being the subject of considerable research in the 20th century, however, the pace and popularity of research on the treatise tapered off in the 21st century, primarily due to a decline in the popularity of Sanskrit and closure of Indology departments in universities around the world.

The literature review identified elements of Kautilya's strategic doctrine, many of which bear contemporary similarity. The concepts of *Matsya Nyaya* (anarchy), *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of a state), concept of state power, *Mandala* (circle of states) theory, *Sadgunya* (six-fold policy), and *Upayas* (four stratagems) are the key elements identified and explained in this chapter. Kautilya's analysis of conquerors, his philosophy for weaker king, and his philosophy for ruling over conquered territory are other relevant aspects of the treatise identified in this chapter.

The second part of the literature review studied contemporary concepts of strategic thought relevant to the idea of national power. An examination of the theories of state of nature and social contract indicated the formative ideas behind a contemporary state-government and society. The review also identified the concepts of self-determination and universalism, which provide the basis for the idealist and realist schools of thought. The review identified a contemporary framework of national power and theories associated with power in an international environment.

The review also identified certain causes of conflict and strategies for the application of power in an international system. This part introduced the contemporary concepts of preemption or prevention of war, the concepts of coercion, compellance, and deterrence. This chapter also identified the construct of DIME as a model for application of national power.

The *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought are analogous in several aspects i.e. the concept of a natural state of social disorder, causes of conflict, national power, and strategies for using power. The treatise exhibits concepts of both realist and

idealist schools of thought. While remaining grounded in *dharma* (morality and ethics) Kautilya propounds hegemony as a solution to survival in an anarchical environment.

A model for the application of *Arthaśāstra* to the contemporary strategic environment is present in Sachin More's work. Sachin More analyzed Pakistan's strategic policy choices using *Arthaśāstra.* He found that Kautilya's doctrine could explain Pakistan's policy flaws. In a similar manner, this paper will use Kautilya's strategic thought to assess China's strategic behavior and Chinese geo-political environment.

Having identified the answers to the first two secondary research questions, this study is now in a position to address the third secondary research question: what are the similarities and dissimilarities between the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought? Thereafter, this paper will focus on the fourth secondary research question: how can we use the *Arthaśāstra* to assess the contemporary geo-political environment?

Chapter 3 utilizes the above ideas in outlining a research methodology for this study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

> Thus, what is of supreme importance in war is to attack the enemy's strategy;
>
> ― Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans. Samuel B. Griffith

Overview

Chapter 1 of this study presented an ancient Indian treatise titled the *Arthaśāstra* and introduced the topic of contemporary strategic thought. Chapter 1 also identified the research questions, significance, and scope of this study. This chapter delimited research to identifying concepts associated with the elements of national power and their application in an international environment.

Chapter 2 reviewed literature on the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic theories relevant to the idea of national power as well its application. Chapter 2 provided answers to the secondary research questions regarding the key concepts of the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought. The review also identified certain scholarly debates and trends regarding the *Arthaśāstra.*

Chapter 3 will establish a framework for carrying out further research in order to ascertain the relevance of *Arthaśāstra* to contemporary strategic thought.

Research Methodology

The research methodology (see figure 13) aims at answering the primary research question using secondary and tertiary questions. The literature review, which addressed the first two secondary questions, sets the stage for analysis in support of the other

secondary research questions in chapter 4. In figure 13 the use of the term "national power" in parentheses is based upon the delimitations of this paper and indicates the focus area of the research question.
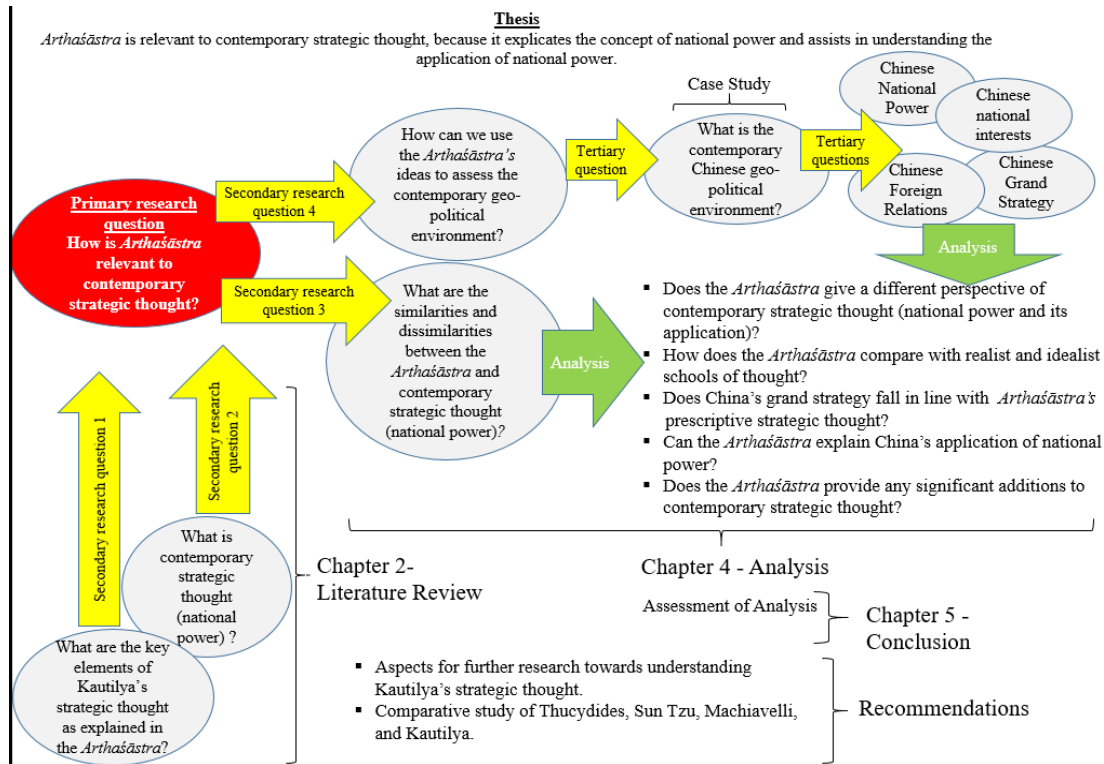
Figure 13. Research methodology

Source: Created by author.

Key Elements of Kautilya's Strategic Doctrine

The first part of chapter 2 of the study examined the primary and secondary sources of literature on the *Arthaśāstra* and identified certain key concepts surrounding the bigger idea of national power. These include: (1) concept of internal and external anarchy of a state (*Matsya Nyaya*), (2) constituent elements of a state (*Prakṛti*),

(3) concept of state power (4) concept of circle of states (*Raj Mandala* theory) (5) six-fold policy (*Sadgunya*) (6) Four stratagems (*Upayas*) (7) philosophy for the weaker state, and (8) rule over conquered territory.

The second part of chapter 2 identified key concepts of contemporary strategic thought relevant to the concept of national power in an international system.

Key Concepts of Contemporary Strategic Thought

Chapter 2 of the study also examined works on contemporary strategic thought and identified certain key concepts. This part of the chapter answered the secondary research question regarding the key concepts of contemporary strategic thought, within the context of national power. The review of literature focused on : (1) contemporary concept of state, (2) contemporary framework of national power, (3) the security dilemma, (4) theories of power , (5) causes of conflict, and, (4) application of power and formulation of strategy.

Research and Analysis

Having identified the key concepts of the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought, this paper will compare and contrast the ancient and modern concepts, thereby answering the third secondary research question. A comparison of Kautilya's strategic guidelines and modern strategic thought, using a contemporary case study will allow for drawing inferences about the relevance of *Arthaśāstra* to contemporary strategic thought. The research and analysis in chapter 4 will answer the fourth secondary research question–how can we use Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* to assess the contemporary geo-political environment?

Viewing China as a *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror), this paper will analyze China's strategic policy choices. Kautilya created his treatise for use by a *Vijigishu* who pursues power and happiness in an international environment called the *Raj Mandala* (circle of states). This method of considering China as a *Vijigishu* is similar to Sachin More's work, in which he aimed to prove the *Arthaśāstra's* contemporary relevance by considering Pakistan as a *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror).

Using the *Arthaśāstra* as a doctrinal lens for viewing China's policies and the Chinese geo-political environment should allow for drawing broader inferences about the treatise's applicability to contemporary strategic thought. Research into China's geo-political environment will be guided by tertiary questions to ascertain China's national power, national interests, grand strategy, and foreign relations. This thesis seeks to establish whether China's grand strategy and application of national power are in congruence with the *Arthaśāstra*'s prescriptive concepts. This analysis will also enable the author to place the *Arthaśāstra* within the realist or idealist school of thought.

Chapter 4 of this study will now address the balance secondary research questions and certain tertirary questions, in order to answer the primary research question.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS

> The enemy, however strong he may be, becomes vulnerable to harassment
> and destruction when he is squeezed between the conqueror and his allies.
> ― Kauṭilya, *The Arthashastra,* trans. L. N. Rangarajan

Overview

In order to identify the relevance of Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* to contemporary strategic thought, this study has thus far addressed two out of the four secondary research questions. The study has identified the key elements of Kautilya's strategic doctrine as explained in the *Arthaśāstra* and has explored the concept of contemporary strategic thought.

Addressing the third secondary research question, this chapter shall first compare the *Arthaśāstra* with contemporary strategic thought, in order to identify similarities and dissimilarities of ideas. Thereafter, this chapter will attend to the fourth and final secondary research question–how can we use Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* to assess the contemporary geo-political environment?

In addressing the fourth secondary research question, this chapter will verify the contemporary application of Kautilya's treatise using China as a case study. In doing so, this chapter will study China as a nation in context of the Chinese contemporary geo-political environment. The study of China will include research on Chinese national power, grand strategy, foreign policy, and inter-state relations. During this examination, this paper will analyze China's geo-political environment from the perspective of Kautilya's doctrine in the *Arthaśāstra*. That will set the stage for concluding and

assessing this paper's answer to the primary research question- how is Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* relevant to contemporary strategic thought?

<u>Comparing *Arthaśāstra* with Contemporary</u>
<u>Strategic Thought</u>

A comparative study of the strategic thought of the *Arthaśāstra* and our contemporary strategic thought indicates both similarities as well as dissimilarities. The fact that the *Arthaśāstra* does not use historical examples to formulate an analysis, lends the treatise to be more similar rather than dissimilar to contemporary strategic thought.

The contemporary theories of state of nature and social contract are similar to Kautilya's *Matsya Nyaya* (anarchy in society) theory. Both Kautilya and contemporary politico-strategic scholars accept the idea of a natural state of disorder due to selfish human aspirations. Both scholars also exhibit congruence in the idea that a socially accepted governance prevents internal anarchy. To address internal anarchy of society (*Matsya Nyaya*), Kautilya prescribes a social contract of stable governance between the king and society, underpinned on the concept of social welfare (*Yogakshema*).

A dissimilarity between Kautilya and contemporary strategic thought is that, although Kautilya creates a relationship between the society's welfare and the king's duties, the treatise does not talk of a system of checks and balances to avoid tyrannical one-man rule. Unlike contemporary states, which create the institutions of executive, legislature, and judiciary, Kautilya's treatise subordinates a state's institutions to the king and does not prescribe an elected system of governance or a democracy. Kautilya's system thus does not prevent a despot from ruling the state.

Kautilya's *Prakṛti* or the constituent elements of state are akin to the

contemporary concept of having an internal dimension of national power (see table 1).

From a modern nation's perspective (column 2 of table 1), we can relate each Kautilyan

element to an essential contemporary variable of national power.

In terms of similarities, both Kautilya's model and Tellis et al.'s model discuss

national resources and military capability as a key contributor of national power. All

three models look at the inter-linkages between the various constituent elements of state.

Kautilya's priority for the constituent elements wherein he gives the king or leadership

the highest priority differs from Tellis et al.'s model but is similar to the power transition

theory's model.

Table 1.   Comparison of models of national power

Prakṛti or constituent elements of state in Kautilya's order of priority	Kautilya's constituent elements from a modern nation state's perspective	Power transition theory model of national power	Tellis *et al* model of national power
King or leadership	Political leadership	Political capability (short term impact on changes in national power)	National resources - Technology - Enterprise - Human resources - Financial/capital resources - Physical resources
Council of ministers or state officials	Legislature and bureaucracy		
Territory and population	National resources	Population's economic productivity (medium term impact on changes in national power)	National performance - External constraints - Infrastructural capacity - Ideational resources
Fortified cities	Nation's defenses and urban resources		
Treasury	Economic resources	Population (long term impact on changes in national power)	Military capability - Strategic resources and conversion capability = Combat proficiency
Armed Forces	Military		
Allies	Allies		

Source: Created by author.

Kautilya's model per se does not include a dimension of performance or the capability to convert latent power into operational power. However, Kautilya's focus on strengthening and optimizing the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state) indicate his understanding of the concept of national performance and relative power.

Kautilya's doctrine does not correspond to contemporary concepts of the diffusion of power to non-state actors, intergovernmental agencies, and non-governmental organizations. For Kautilya's doctrine, power remains firmly within the *Prakṛti* or the constituent elements of state.

In power transition theory's terminology, Kautilya's progressive state is similar to a future challenger state, which would eventually challenge the international status quo. Kautilya understands the power differences between states and exhorts his protagonist – the *Vijigishu*, to keep his state on a path of continued economic progress, security, and stability using the four stratagems (*Upayas*) and the six-fold policy (*Sadgunya*).

Kautilya's doctrine leverages the concept of alliances as explained in the theory of balance of power. Kautilya cements alliances between states using various types of peace treaties (*Samdhi*). In analyzing the various type of alliance, Kautilya's advice rests upon the relative power between the states. Kautilya's policy option of *Samsraya* (seeking protection) is similar to the contemporary concept of bandwagoning while the policies of *Yana* (preparing for war), *Dvaidhibhava* (dual policy), and *Samdhi* (peace) are analogous to internal and external balancing of a state.

Review of literature did not indicate two different contemporary models for measuring internal and inter-state relative national power, however, Kautilya's model for inter-state relative power is different from his model of national power or *Prakṛti*

(constituent elements of state). In assessing relative power between states, Kautilya places a state's intellectual strength higher than the state's economic, military, and political strengths.

In comparing Kautilya to the realist and idealist schools of thought, Kautilya's treatise appears to be an ambiguous mixture of idealism and realism. From an idealist's perspective, Kautilya's focus is not on hegemonic conquest of the earth, but on economic progress, stability, and security of the state. Focusing more on stability and security, Kautilya limits the *Vijigishu's* area of conquest to the confines of the Indian subcontinent, rather than create motivation for endless hegemonic conquests. In line with the idealist's school of thought, Kautilya identifies the subjects' welfare and happiness (*Yogakshema*) as the state's objective. For consolidating rule over conquered territory, Kautilya advocates for the just and welfare oriented rule of the captured populace.

From a realists' perspective, Kautilya supports hegemonic policies, which ignore religious, ethical, and moral considerations. Falling squarely in the realist school, Kautilya's interstate interactions are power and security maximizing in nature. Kautilya does not rely upon alliances or allies to help in the state's progress, instead he focuses on optimizing those *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state), which are under the direct control of the king. Quite unlike idealist views, Kautilya thinks only about the interests of the *Vijigishu*'s state rather than the global humanity's progress.

Kautilya's strategies for addressing external anarchy in international relations is through the six fold policy underpinned by the four stratagems. If we compare Kautilya's six-fold policy (*Sadgunya*) with the contemporary instruments of power described by the acronym DIME (see table 2), a majority of his prescribed policies lie in the domain of

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diplomacy. This falls in line with Kautilya's analysis that for assessing relative power between states, the intellectual strength of a nation (which includes the power of counsel and diplomacy) is more important than military or leadership strengths.

Kautilya's application of force through warfare (see table 2) falls in the contemporary category of hard power. Although Kautilya's provides a diverse spectrum of options for conducting warfare including psychological and diplomatic measures, he does not explore coercive economic strategies in his treatise. In contemporary strategic thought, coercive economic strategies like embargoes and sanctions are important applications of force by a state. Although Kautilya's treatise explores the dimension of hard power, he does not speak of the soft dimension of power.

Table 2.   Comparing DIME, Kautilya's six fold policy and hard power options

Contemporary instruments of power	Kautilya's six fold policy	Kautilya's types of warfare	Kautilya's warfare as hard power
Diplomacy	- Make peace (*Samdhi*) - Dual policy (*Dvaidhibhava*) - Seeking protection (*Samsraya*) - Neutral (*Asana*)	- Secret war using treachery and psychological measures - Diplomatic war using diplomatic offensive measures - Undeclared war using clandestine methods, assassinations, and secret agents - Open war at designated time and place	Lower intensity
Information			
Military	- Preparing for war (*Yana*) - War (*Vigraha*)		Higher intensity
Economic			

Source: Created by author.

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This paper's research indicates that identification of soft power, as a concept is contemporary in nature. Although, historical attraction for India in the Chinese culture indicates that cultural and ideological attraction existed in the ancient world, their rightful place as soft power strategies was not explored by Kautilya.

In terms of design and formulation of strategy, Kautilya's doctrine is similar to contemporary ideas on the subject. Akin to contemporary strategic thought, Kautilya's political purpose drove the design of strategy and strategic choices by the *Vijigishu*. Kautilya's political purpose was the happiness of the state and this objective drove the Kautilyan state's strategy. In line with contemporary emphasis on adopting a proactive strategy, Kautilya exhorts the *Vijigishu* to prevent the state's stagnation or decline. Instead, Kautilya pushes for the adoption of strategies, which would assure continued progress of the state and the decline of enemy states.

This research finds Kautilya discussing strategy formulation from an ends-ways-means-risks perspective. Kautilya has clear ends, ways, and means in his doctrine (see figure 14). Kautilya's respect for risks in strategy is evident in his elaborate research into the aspect of *Vyasana* (calamities) which can reduce the strength of a state's constituent elements. Kautilya's macro strategy of optimizing a state's *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state) addresses the inherent risks in strategy. Kautilya's treatise provides clear territorial, socio-economic, and relative power end states for the *Vijigishu*'s state. Kautilya's ways for reaching the end state are by optimizing the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state), while the means are the *Upayas* (four stratagems) as well as the *Sadgunya* (six- fold policy).

Kautilya's treatise includes contemporary concepts of preemption and prevention. For a weaker king facing a belligerent stronger king, Kautilya's prescribes preemptive options using diplomacy, information operations, and covert military operations. Kautilya advises the weaker king to adopt strategies, which would prevent the stronger state from launching successful offensive operations, thus preventing the capture of the weaker state.
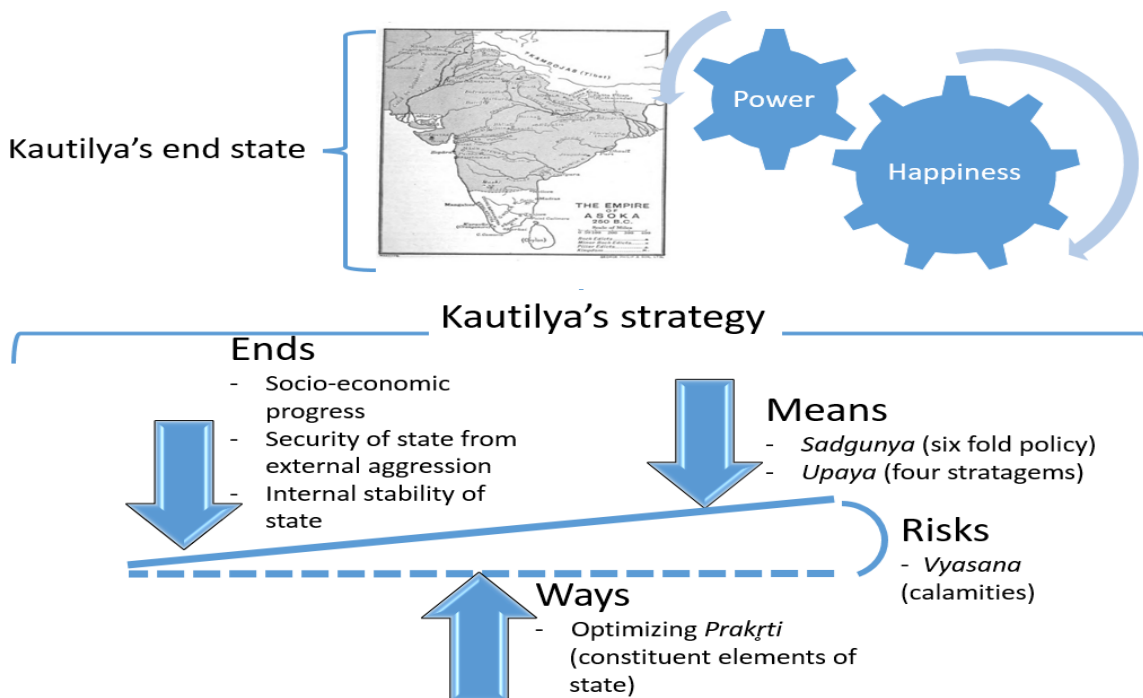
Figure 14. Kautilya's doctrine from an Ends-Ways-Means perspective

Source: Created by author.

Kautilya holds contemporary concepts such as information operations and perception management as vital for the *Vijigishu*'s policy formulation and execution. Kautilya's offensive usage of information operations is visible in his advice for breaking

up rival states by sowing dissension through undeclared warfare. Kautilya indicates that a conqueror perceived as righteous will face relatively less opposition in securing the submission of the defeated king.

Akin to the contemporary theory for consolidating operational victories into strategic successes, Kautilya encourages the *Vijigishu* to win over both the defeated king and the vanquished population through pragmatic and ethical policies underpinned on successful perception management practices. Instead of forcing the vanquished population to change their culture, Kautilya advises the *Vijigishu* to adopt the captured state's culture. Kautilya's doctrine sagely prescribes ethical, just, progressive, and favorable policies for the captured territories.

The purpose of the next part of chapter 4 is to validate Kautilya's doctrine using China as a case study. Having compared Kautilya's strategic thought with contemporary thought, this paper will now consider China as Kautilya's protagonist or the *Vijigishu* to enable a Kautilyan assessment of China's contemporary strategic behavior and geo-political environment.

China's Contemporary Geo-political Environment from a Kautilyan perspective

> But as the power of Hellas grew, and the acquisition of wealth became more an objective, the revenues of the states increasing, tyrannies were established almost everywhere.[191]

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[191] Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides: A Comprehensive Guide to the Peloponnesian War*, ed. Robert B. Strassler (New York: Free Press, 2008).

Asian economic growth, maritime disputes, and continued provocations by North Korea have added to the security dynamics of Asia within the past few decades.[192] China's economic and military might, diplomatic influence, and an increased involvement in regional multinational institutions has dominated the Asian geostrategic scenario. China has endeavored to establish its ownership over disputed territories through systematic and concrete actions on ground and sea.[193] Asia has also witnessed a rebalance of US policies, which indicates the increased importance of the region for US interests. The Chinese, in turn, have criticized the US rebalance to Asia and have blamed the policy for increasing regional tensions.[194]

China's Rise as a Regional Power

China as a nation has transitioned from a colonial nation to a growing regional and perhaps global power. Contemporary China underwent transitions in the social, political, and economic realms. The CCP orchestrated these ongoing transitions, which include the transition from "a revolutionary state to a developmental state, from a domestic-oriented economy to a trading state, and from a leninist party-state to an

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[192] Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy* (Washington, DC: The White House, 2015), 10, 13, 24, accessed February 23, 2016, https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/02/06/fact-sheet-2015-national-security-strategy.

[193] Phillip C. Saunders, "China's Rising Power, the U.S. Rebalance to Asia, and Implications for U.S.-China Relations," *Issues and Studies* 50, no. 3 (September 2014): 44, accessed February 23, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1634868500?accountid=28992.

[194] Ibid., 20, 47.

authoritarian [italics added] polity."[195] The Chinese government identifies China's rise as a world power as a "peaceful rise."[196] On the other hand, a group of scholars view China's growth as a growing "China threat."[197]

The China threat-theory perceives China as using its power for regional destabilization; the threat is ideological, economic, and military. The theory is cynical about the efficacy of economic engagement in transforming China into a stable and peaceful force. Instead, theorists argue that China's growing economic strength will enable China to threaten regional peace, challenge US interests in the region, and threaten American markets. Thy argue that Chinese military modernization is designed to "replace the US as the dominant power in the region."[198]

The Chinese claim of a "peaceful rising" is a response to these perceptions, which viewed the country as a regional threat.[199] While China aspires to become an enduring

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[195] Daniel Flemes, ed., *Regional Leadership in the Global System: Ideas, Interests and Strategies of Regional Powers* (Farnham, Surrey, England: Ashgate, 2010), 208, 210-219, accessed February 24, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[196] Priscilla Roberts, ed., *Going Soft? The US and China Go Global* (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2014), 2, accessed February 23, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[197] Emma V. Broomfield, "Perceptions of Danger: the China threat theory," *Journal of Contemporary China* 12, no. 35 (May 2003): 265, accessed February 6, 2016, EBSCOhost.

[198] Broomfield, 266.

[199] Roujie Wang, "Hey, 'Red China' is Brand New: A Case Study of China's Self-Depicted National Identity on its Promotional Video 'Experience China'," *Quarterly Journal of Chinese Studies* 2, no. 1 (Autumn 2013): 60, accessed February 6, 2016, http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1459340956?accountid=28992.

"first-rate world power"; however, China does not seek to engage in a major military conflict or a protracted cold war with any other great power(s).[200]

US strategy is determined to monitor China's military modernization, while lessening any "misunderstanding or miscalculation."[201] The US welcomes the emergence of a "stable, peaceful, and prosperous China", while focusing more on cooperation and refuting the "inevitability of confrontation."[202]

China's rise as a regional power is similar to Kautilya's idea of a regional power – the *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror). By aspiring to maximize China's economic and military power, China's strategic behavior closely resembles that of Kautilya's *Vijigishu*. The simulatenous rise of China and growing perceptions of a China "threat" indicates that China as a *Vijigishu* follows Kautilya's advice of adopting policies which keep China on a "progressive" path while contributing to the the decline of enemy states.

The next few paragraphs will study China's core interests and decision-making system, which play a key role in China's rise as a national power, and analyse them using Kautilya's treatise.

China's Core Interests and Decision-making System

The Chinese government has acknowledged three core interests, "(1) the protection of the basic system [existing socio-political order of China] and national security of the PRC state . . . (2) the preservation of China's national sovereignty and

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[200] Roberts, 2.

[201] Barack Obama, *National Security Strategy*, 2015, 24.

[202] Ibid.

territorial integrity . . .; and (3) the continued stable development of China's economy and society."[203] At the level of grand strategy, scholars at RAND identify China's "three interrelated objectives [as]: . . . [1] the preservation of domestic order and well-being in the face of different forms of social strife; . . . [2] the defense against persistent external threats to national sovereignty and territory; . . . [3] the attainment and maintenance of geopolitical influence as a major, and perhaps primary, state."[204]

With the rise in national power, China has strengthened the protection of its core interests and expanded their scope. Chinese national interests have grown beyond survival of the CCP's rule and mere economic progress; they also extend beyond the territory of China. With the growing national power and domestic pressures, Chinese territorial claims are likely to become more robust and "stubborn."[205]

The CCP's Politburo and standing committee are the core decision-making authorities in China's centralized system of governance. The Chinese decision-making system comprises five bodies: "party, government, army, law, and people."[206] At the

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[203] Michael D. Swaine, *America's Challenge: Engaging a Rising China in the Twenty-First Century* (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2011), 160-163, accessed May 2, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[204] Michael D. Swaine, Ashley J. Tellis, and Peter W. Greenwood, *Interpreting China's Grand Strategy: Past, Present, and Future* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2000), x, accessed February 28, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[205] Kai He and Huiyun Feng, "Debating China's Assertiveness: Taking China's Power and Interests Seriously," *International Politics* 49, no. 5 (September 2012): 637, accessed February 24, 2016, http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/doc view/1082083624?accountid=28992.

[206] Kenneth Lieberthal, Cheng Li, and Keping Yu, *China's Political Development: Chinese and American Perspectives* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2014), 342-343, accessed February 24, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

center of these five bodies is the CCP, which is the principal component of the decision-making system. The CCP permanently retains power and leads the decision-making system, while exercising complete control over the state organs and the military.[207]

The CCP places economic progress as the party's central agenda, in its struggle for national rejuvenation and realization of communism. According to the constitution, the CCP's aims "to turn China into a prosperous, strong, democratic, culturally advanced and harmonious modern socialist country by making economic development the central task."[208]

The Chinese leadership considers the military as critical for achieving the aspirations of "national rejuvenation" and the ststus of a "great power."[209] The Chinese leadership believes that a strong and modern military is vital for protecting Chinese interests. In case of a failure of deterrence, the Chinese military must defend the nation.[210] Chinese military policy has prioritized the development of "strategic technology capabilities," which serves as one of the "core pillars" of Chinese national

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[207] Ibid., 342-345.

[208] News of the Communist Party of China, "Full Text of Constitution of Communist Party of China," accessed March 28, 2016, http://english.cpc.people.com.cn /206972/206981/8188087.html.

[209] U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress-Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015* (Washington, DC: Department of Defense, 2015), I, accessed March 28, 2016, http://www.defense.gov/ Portals/1/Documents/pubs/2015_China_Military_Power_Report.pdf.

[210] Ibid.

power.[211] These core interests and China's decision-making system show a consistency with Kautilya's strategic thought.

China's authoritarian political system is in alignment with Kautilya's concept of the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of a state). The CCP's dominant position in China's internal political structure is analogous to Kautilya's highest prioritization of the state's leadership among the seven *Prakṛti.* Kautilya's support for the protection of the king's rule from internal strife and power struggles is similar to the Chinese core interest of protecting the CCP's rule over China. China's policy focus on its economy before military aggrandizement is also in line with Kautilya's concept of optimizing the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state) in their relative order of priority. In Kautilya's order of importance for the *Prakṛti*, the treasury comes before the state's army. Having achieved a strong economy, China has started making heavy investments in modernizing its military forces. Apart from the aforementioned similarities, this paper's research also highlights a dissimilarity between Kautilya's strategic thought and China's strategic behavior.

Although for both China and the Kautilyan state, pursuit of the state's economic progress is a central agenda item, the CCP's constitution does not exhibit an analogous concept to Kautilya's emphasis on the happiness of the populace. The CCP's constitution does not appear to impose any contractual obligations towards Chinese society. While the CCP authoritatively leads China's population on the path of socio-economic modernization, the Kautilyan king is duty bound to the population in three aspects,

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[211] Tai Ming Cheung, "Continuity and Change in China's Strategic Innovation System," *Issues and Studies* 51, no. 2 (June 2015): 139, accessed March 28, 2016, http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1717573128?accountid=28992.

providing social welfare, internal stability, and securing the state from external aggression.

Having studied and compared China's decision making system, and national interests with Kautilya's strategic thought, this paper will now examine China's grand strategy.

China's Grand Strategy

From a contemporary scholar's perspective, grand strategy is a "combination of political, economic, military, cultural and ideological" means used to secure the national interests.[212] Chinese contemporary strategy resembles a calculative, pragmatic, and measured approach to policymaking, which is oriented to protect Chinese interests while permitting China's rise as a global power.[213] China's grand strategy uses all the elements of national power including political, economic, informational, and military means.[214]

China adroitly uses diplomatic, economic, and informational instruments in a holistic manner to increase Chinese global influence. Chinese grand strategy uses both multilateralism and bilateral relations for enhancing its national power.[215] China uses

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[212] Feng Zhang, "Rethinking China's Grand Strategy: Beijing's Evolving National Interests and Strategic Ideas in the Reform Era," *International Politics* 49, no. 3 (May 2012): 319, accessed March 28, 2016, http://dx.doi.org.lumen.cgsccarl.com/10.1057/ip.2012.5.

[213] Swaine, Tellis, and Greenwood, 97-98, 113-114.

[214] Scott P. Nolan, "Economic Warfare: A Study of U.S. and China Strategy Using the Economic Element of National Power" (Monograph, School of Advanced Military Studies, Fort Leavenworth, KS, 2007), 19-20, accessed February 26, 2016, http://cgsc.contentdm.oclc.org/cdm/ref/collection/p4013coll3/id/1238.

[215] Ibid.

bilateral dialogues in circumstances where it seeks to leverage its economic and political advantages. However, China prefers using "selective multilateralism" in relations with more powerful states or a group of states.[216]

From an economic standpoint, China has economically bound itself to a large number of nations and has increased its participation in regional multilateral organizations.[217] Contemporary China plays a calculated role in international regimes and organizations dealing with global and regional issues.

China seeks to prevent losses and make large gains through participation in international regimes while neither displaying an "intrinsic commitment nor an intrinsic antipathy" to internationally accepted regulations.[218] Chinese behavior has varied from active, to conditional participation, and sometimes "outright–overt or covert– defection."[219] Chinese policy appears to be driven by a pragmatic cost-benefit analysis on a case-by-case basis of each international regime.[220]

From the perspective of the informational instrument of power, a 2011 Chinese promotional video released by the Chinese government showcases Chinese attempts to kindle national pride while depicting modern China as a "confident, attractive and peace-

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[216] Gareis, 7.

[217] Flemes, 208, 213, 218.

[218] Swaine, Tellis, and Greenwood, 133.

[219] Ibid., 134.

[220] Ibid., 133-135.

loving nation."[221] China's strategy frequently uses soft power strategies to reassure

neighboring states, and promoting non-confrontational relations with major powers. [222]

Of all the instruments of national power, Chinese military modernization is a key

feature of China's growing power and a key concern for the Asian region and the world.

Chinese military modernization has a two-fold aim, to "reduce China's existing

vulnerabilities while increasing the utility of its military forces to secure diplomatic and

political leverage."[223] Potential conflicts in the Taiwan Strait, East China Sea, and South

China Sea drive China towards military modernization. The US Department of Defense

associates China's long-term military modernization program with an aim to "fight short-

duration, high-intensity regional conflicts."[224] China's security concerns remain the

prime drivers of Chinese military strategy and the development of ther armed forces.

Scholars argue that over the course of history, China's strategy has been

influenced by four security considerations: a long international border which necessitates

security measures, "potential threats, both nearby and distant," personality-based national

leadership which leads to internal political frictions, and national self-perception as a

"great power."[225] Addressing the border disputes has been a key feature of China's

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[221] Wang, 60.

[222] Flemes, 208, 214, 216.

[223] Swaine, Tellis, and Greenwood, 121.

[224] U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress-Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China*, I.

[225] Swaine, Tellis, and Greenwood, 9.

strategy. China has solved some border disputes with neighboring states and shelved other disputes in the interest of promoting regional peace.

As part of a "good-neighbor policy," China avoids using force to resolve territorial disputes.[226] China has postponed the resolution of territorial claims while it has strengthened ties with its neighbors until the balance of power shifts in China's favor. Policy makers in Beijing recognize that despite the enduring security significance of China's peripheries, they lack adequate military capability to resolve all the territorial disputes by force and they should not allow these disputes to detracted from economic growth as a great power.[227] By 2012, China had successfully negotiated border settlements with nine neighbors; however, unresolved territorial disputes with eleven others persist. In the cases of Afghanistan, North Korea, and Pakistan, borders were settled through secret treaties, which potentially render the settlements subject to challenge in the future. Moreover, border concessions by Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan to China have been unpopular with the populations of the central Asian states.[228]

How, then, does China's grand strategy stack up from a Kautilyan perspective? The security considerations that drive China's grand strategy are similar to Kautilya's concept of *Rakshana* (protection of the state and subjects). Kautilya's *Vijigishu* (the

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[226] Ibid., 129.

[227] Ibid., 129-134.

[228] Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin, and Clive H. Schofield, ed., *Beijing's Power and China's Borders: Twenty Neighbors in Asia* (Armonk, GB: Routledge, 2014), 312, accessed March 18, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

would-be conqueror) has an obligation to protect the state and the population from external threats. China's grand strategy also exhibits similarities to Kautilya's *Sadgunya* or six-fold policy.

Kautilya's emphasis on peace over war finds congruence in China's strategic inclination to shelve border disputes. Akin to Kautilya's focus on economic growth of the state, China does not want war to act as a Kautilyan *Vyasana* (calamity) and detract China from a path of economic growth. Kautilya also advocates that the *Vijigishu* should use the period of peace to consolidate and build the state's power, before he attempts to conquer his enemy. China's policy of shelving border disputes and waiting for an opportune moment to resolve the disputes also finds similarity in Kautilya's six-fold policy option of *Sandhi* (peace) and *Yana* (preparing for war). An examination of Chinese grand strategy indicates that China is using the "window period" offered by peace treaties (akin to Kautilya's concept of *Sandhi*) in preparing for war (akin to Kautilya's concept of *Yana*) by building a modern military to ostensibly resolve pending border disputes in Beijing's favor.

Some aspects of China's strategic behavior do not have analogies in Kautilya's strategic thought. As has been brought out earlier, Kautilya's treatise does not reflect the contemporary concept of soft power. In a dissimilarity from Kautilya's strategic thought, China's soft power plays a significant role in Chinese self-perception and the Chinese grand strategy. Kautilya's treatise also does not address the modern ideas of multilateralism and international organizations. China's grand strategy uses multilateralism and international organizations to serve its national interests. While Kautilya wrote about oligarchies, he did not clearly address the concepts of

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multilateralism and a coherent strategy toward international organizations. As a mitigation of this dissimilarity, Kautilya's *Upayas* (four strategems) and Kautilya's social contract between the *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) and the populace, provide a framework for developing suitable strategies.

The next section of this chapter will examine China's foreign relations in the international environment. This paper will then use Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) theory to analyse China's relatuionships with its own "circle of states."

Principal Features of Chinese Foreign Policy

Chinese foreign policy is grounded in the doctrine of peaceful coexistence, China's core interests, and the One-China concept. The "Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence" promote the concepts of sovereignty, mutual respect between nations, and non-interference in internal governance of other nations.[229] Two non-negotiable core interests further drive China's foreign policy, China's "internal stability and development . . . [along with] national sovereignty and territorial integrity."[230] China resolutely adheres to the "One China Principle" which considers not just Taiwan, but also Tibet and Xinjiang to be integral parts of the Chinese federation.[231]

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[229] Dr. Sven Gareis, *Taking Off as a Global Power? China's Foreign Policy "Grand Strategy,"* (Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George C. Marshall European Center for Security Studies, 2013), 7, accessed March 18, 2016, http://www.marshall center.org/mcpublicweb/MCDocs/files/College/F_Publications/occPapers/occ-paper_24-en.pdf.

[230] Ibid.

[231] Ibid.

Contemporary China's increasingly assertive and pragmatic foreign policy reflects an internal consensus among Chinese policymakers who desire a growing China to be a norms developer *cum* promoter on the international stage. Contemporary Chinese policies and actions in Africa, for example, illustrate a growing Chinese trend of "reframing [western] established norms on security and development" in alignment with Chinese core interests.[232] The promotion of Chinese norms provides pragmatic direction and options for Beijing beyond the non-interference policy enshrined in the peaceful coexistence doctrine. Chinese policies in Africa are presently complementary to those of the United Nations and African Union, although China views Africa to be favorable for promotion of a "China-friendly set of values."[233]

Asdie from the top political leaders, the Chinese bureaucracy is a key player in the formulation of foreign and domestic policy. The increasing importance of China's bureaucracy also indicates that Chinese decision-making is no longer concentrated in the hands of one leader such as Mao Zedong or Deng Xiaoping. Contemporary China's foreign policy formulation has matured into a pluralistic process involving political leaders, bureaucracy, think tanks, and public opinion.[234]

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[232] Chris Alden and Daniel Large, "On becoming a norms maker: Chinese foreign policy, norms evolution and the challenges of security in Africa," *The China Quarterly* 221 (March 2015): 123, accessed March 18, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1691603713?accountid=28992.

[233] Ibid., 139.

[234] Lai Hongyi and Su-Jeong Kang, "Domestic Bureaucratic Politics and Chinese Foreign Policy," *Journal of Contemporary China* 23, no. 86 (March 2014): 294, 312-313, accessed March 18, 2016, EBSCOhost.

Apart from the trends of "principled pragmatism," Chinese foreign policy also exhibits a trend of being "less state-centric and more people-oriented."[235] Chinese policies have increasingly focused on the happiness quotient of people rather than pure economic growth. Chinese officials are increasingly discussing linkages between government performance and the population's happiness. Scholars assert that contemporary Chinese policies endeavor towards more genuine and cohesive national progress.[236]

The key features of China's foreign policy, as described above, show certain similarities with Kautilya's strategic thought. Although the CCP's constitution does not contain a social contract based upon the the Chinese population's welfare, domestic concerns increasingly drive the foreign policies of a rising China. China's pursuit of communism and socialist modernization are indicative of efforts towards enhancing the society's degree of happiness and contentment. Contemporary China's strategic behavior as the *Vijigishu* (the would-be conqueror) therefore appears to be analogous with Kautilya's pursuit of power and social contentment.

Beyond the broad contours of China's foreign policy, China's relations with her neighbors as well as regional and global powers also bear examination from a Kautilyan perspective.

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[235] Ren Xiao and Gordon C. K. Cheung, "Sources and transitions of Chinese foreign policy: An introduction," *East Asia : An International Quarterly* 28, no. 3 (2011): 173, accessed March 18, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search. proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/884274739?accountid=28992.

[236] Ibid.

China's relations with Russia

Sino-Russian relations have significantly influenced the contours of world order and are critical for a stable Eurasia and Asia-Pacific region. Concerns over a US-led world order and pragmatic mutual interests have driven Sino-Russian relations. However, this relationship has not shown signs of a positive long-term character based upon mutual trust.[237] China and Russia share a number of mutual interests. Both countries have a need to maintain geographic spheres of influence. Both countries are against an expansion of the membership of the UN Security Council and a potential loss of their veto power. China and Russia are also against international concerns or interference in a sovereign state's handling of human rights and minority self-determination.[238]

Domestic economic growth including agriculture, weapons production, and energy trade are other key bilateral interests between China and Russia. China has been a key developer of the undeveloped Russian Far East (RFE) region. In 2012, Chinese farmers worked nearly half of the arable land in the Jewish autonomous region of the RFE, while they grew nearly all the vegetables in the RFE.[239] Weapons trade is another key binding factor between the two countries. China has historically been a recipient of Russian military aid and a key importer of Russian military equipment. In terms of energy trade, Russia remains a major energy exporter, while China provides a profitable

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[237] Paul J. Bolt, "Sino-Russian Relations in a Changing World Order," *Strategic Studies Quarterly* 8, no. 4 (Winter 2014): 47-48, 51, accessed March 2, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1635296079?accountid=28992.

[238] Ibid., 49-50.

[239] Ibid., 54.

market for Russian oil and gas.[240] While Russia and China do have their areas of mutual interest, they also share points of friction.

Experts have often identified a lack of mutual affection and Russian ambivalence at strategic summits, which in turn indicate an absence of a strategic vision for creating an enduring bond.[241] Chinese and Russian interests have clashed in Central Asia. Russia's invasion of Ukraine and Georgia, and the referendum in Crimea, created dangerous precedents for Chinese claims in Tibet and Taiwan.[242] Chinese hegemonic visions threaten Russia's strategic interests, while Beijing's growing military capability creates Russian security concerns. Economically, Russia remains more dependent on trade with China, and an unbalanced trade balance in favor of China acts as an irritant in Sino-Russian relations.[243]

Applying Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) theory to contemporary Sino-Russian relations indicates that Russia can fit into the role of a middle king. Kautilya's middle king borders the *Vijigishu*'s state and is more powerful than the *Vijigishu*'s state or the *Vijigishu*'s enemy. The ambivalence in Sino-Russian relations makes Russia neither an outright Chinese ally nor a staunch Chinese enemy. Making a broad assumption that the former-Soviet Union and present-day Russia are more powerful than China, Russia fits the bill as a potential middle king.

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[240] Ibid., 52-55.

[241] Bolt., 51.

[242] Ibid., 52.

[243] Ibid., 55.

China's relations with the US

China's relations with the US and major global powers is a key part of Chinese grand strategy. China has sought to create a positive environment for its peaceful rise, and therefore has endeavored to maintain friendly relations with the US and other major global players. Chinese policy aims to promote the idea that Chinese growth is a stabilizing feature in Asia. Maintaining friendly relations improves China's economic growth due to access to the markets of these countries. In addition, a cooperative-friendly strategy prevents a "US defensive counterresponse" that would create a power gap between China and the US or other major players.[244]

Despite Chinese force posturing, the US national strategy remains committed to maintaining a stable Asia-Pacific region. The US policy of "rebalance to Asia" focuses on "comprehensive diplomatic, economic, and military approach that pays more attention to India, Southeast Asia, and [Asian] regional institutions."[245] The US continues to expand cooperation with China in areas of overlapping national interests including military-to-military cooperation. The US government continues to attempt to resolve differences constructively and has continued to monitor the evolving Chinese strategy and growth of military power.[246] However, China's response to the US rebalance to Asia has been less than positive. Chinese officials have criticized the US rebalance to Asia and attributed the US policy to a reduction of trust in Sino-US relations. Chinese scholars

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[244] Swaine, Tellis, and Greenwood, 114-115.

[245] Saunders, 19.

[246] U.S. Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress-Military and Security Developments Involving the People's Republic of China 2015*, I.

exhort the US to respect China's core interests, while Chinese officials simultaneously

increase Chinese efforts at building better Sino-US relations.[247] Frictions exist in diverse

aspects of bilateral relations.

Strains in bilateral relations support perceptions about China viewing the US as

the primary Chinese adversary. Some of the key friction points in Sino-US relations are

"U.S.–South Korean naval exercises near China's exclusive economic zone, the

undervaluation of the Chinese currency, Chinese territorial claims, U.S. sales of weapons

to Taiwan, China's indigenous innovation policy, Chinese cyber-attacks on American

computer systems, tighter regulation of foreign businesses in China, and competition for

influence in Asia."[248] Chinese leaders view the US as the main opponent in China's rise

as a great power.[249] In charting an ambiguous approach towards the US, China is likely to

use smart power in its relationship with the US. Beijing is likely to adopt a "dual

strategy" of increasing economic cooperation on one hand and enhancement of Chinese

defense capability directed against the US on the other.[250] Regardless of the issues in the

Sino-US relationship or Beijing's approach toward manging it, for the purpose of further

[247] Saunders, 19-20.

[248] Dick K. Nanto and Mark E. Manyin, "China-North Korea Relations," *North Korean Review* 7, no. 2 (Fall 2011): 95, accessed March 20, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1682435423?accountid=28992.

[249] Michael B. Yahuda, *Sino-Japanese Relations After the Cold War: Two Tigers Sharing a Mountain* (London: Routledge/Taylor and Francis Group, 2014), 1.

[250] Gareis, 12.

analysis of Kautilya's contemporary relevance, this paper will assume that the US has a greater empirical value of national power in comparison to China's.

From a Kautilyan perspective, an assessment of contemporary Sino-US relations indicates that the US does not fit into the role as China's enemy state. Since China perceives the US as an opponent to China's aspirations, the US should logically fit into Kautilya's category of an adversary state. Considering the US as China's adversary, however, goes against the previous analogy of considering Russia as a middle king. While Russia may be more powerful than China, assuming Russia to be more powerful than the US would be a fallacy. The US therefore fits into Kautilya's idea of a neutral state. Kautilya's neutral king is more powerful than the middle king (Russia) and the *Vijigishu's* state (China). Consistent with Kautilya's doctrine, the neutral king does not adjoin the *Vijigishu*'s state and is geographically distant from the *Vijigishu*'s region. As the US is not a Chinese neighbor and is more powerful than the middle king (Russia), this thesis considers the US as a neutral king, in Kautilyan terms.

<u>Sino-Japanese relations</u>

Since the end of the Cold War, China and Japan have faced each other as two great powers of Asia. Both countries have also increasingly become economically interdependent. In 2010, China's economy overtook the Japanese economy. The present framework of the relationship is that of a rising China versus a stagnating Japan.[251]

The Chinese people hold a negative perception of Japan, which is attributable to unresolved historical debates over World War II, visits to the Yasukuni Shrine, Japan's

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[251] Yahuda, 1, 39.

aspiration to permanent membership on the UN Security Council, and conflicting claims to oil fields in the East China Sea.[252] Chinese public opinion towards Japan is "monolithically negative" and Japanese scholars argue that promoting anti-Japanese sentiments strengthens the CCP's legitimacy. [253] Japan sees China's military expenditure and enhancement of Chinese maritime capability as a potential threat, while China views Japan's military acquisitions as adversarial and offensive.[254]

Sino-Japanese relations suffer from a trust deficit and both nations compete in a "great power diplomacy" in Southern and Eastern Asia.[255] In such a scenario, the US provides strategic stability to the region. However, both China and Japan view the US role as potentially destabilizing-China views US policies as efforts to contain China's rise, while Japan fears "American abandonment."[256] As China's opponent and Japan's ally, the US is likely to continue playing a key role in Asia's regional stability and progress. To enable further analysis based on Kautilya's concepts, this paper assumes that China has a greater empirical value of national power in comparison with Japan.

An application of Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) theory to contemporary Sino-Japanese relations indicates that Japan fits into the role of China's adversary or an

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[252] Niklas Swanström and Ryosei Kokubun, *Sino-Japanese Relations: Rivals or Partners in Regional Cooperation?* (Singapore, SG: WSPC, 2012), 38, accessed March 18, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[253] Ibid., 38, 47.

[254] Yahuda, 5.

[255] Ibid.

[256] Ibid., 6.

enemy state. In such a situation, the US, as Kautilya's neutral king, and Russia, as the

middle king, play critical roles by either supporting China's adversary, Japan, or

supporting the *Vijigishu*, China.

Sino-Pakistan relations.

Pakistan considers China a strategic balancer against India, a counterbalance

against the US, and a vital alternate supplier of military hardware. China finds strategic

value in keeping Pakistan as an ally in an anti-containment strategy, as a counterweight to

Indian ambitions in Asia, as an alternate energy corridor, and as a strategic bridge to

Islamic nations.[257]

Contemporary Sino-Pakistan relations have capitalized on a stable Sino-Pakistan

border, created after a secret 1963 agreement, which remains contested by India. Scholars

agree that the Sino-Pakistan border agreement was a compromise deal from the Chinese

side.[258] A dispute-free border permitted the opening of the Karakoram highway, which

created a foundation to strategically link China with Gwadar port in Pakistan and provide

China access to the Indian Ocean.[259] The Chinese link with the Indian Ocean is of

immense strategic and economic benefit to both China and Pakistan.

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[257] Jian Yang and Rashid Ahmed Siddiqi, "About an 'All-Weather' Relationship: Security Foundations of Sino-Pakistan Relations since 9/11," *Journal of Contemporary China* 20, no. 71 (September 2011): 563, 577-579, accessed March 19, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10670564.2011.587159.

[258] Christopher Tang, "The Sino-Pakistan Border: Stability in an Unstable Region," in *Beijing's Power and China's Borders: Twenty Neighbors in Asia*, ed. Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin, and Clive H. Schofield (Armonk, GB: Routledge, 2014), 220, accessed March 24, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

[259] Ibid., 222 -223,227-230.

Apart from finding mutual geopolitical value, certain other strategic factors support Sino-Pakistan bonhomie. Chinese regional ambitions in South Asia, warmer India-US as well as India-Japan relations, and an enduring distrust in China's relations with both the US and India serve to strengthen China's bond with Pakistan.[260] The strong Sino-Pakistan bond manifests itself in China's provision of advanced military hardware, including ballistic missiles, and China's key role in developing Pakistan's nuclear program.[261]

Among the obstacles in bilateral relations, Islamic terrorism in China's Xinjiang province and threats to Chinese citizens in Pakistan remain a significant risk.[262] Militarized Uyghurs trained in Pakistan use the Sino-Pakistan border to support the Uyghur separatist movement in Xinjiang. Pakistan's internal violence has repeatedly targeted Chinese nationals through killing and kidnappings.[263] Notwithstanding these obstacles, Sino-Pakistan relations are largely dispute free and are of considerable strategic benefit to both sides.

In the context of Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) theory, Pakistan is an enduring ally in rising China's strategic calculations. This paper's research also indicates that Sino-Pakistan bilateral friction may reflect Kautilya's philosophy of not trusting allies in totality, however this analogy merits further research.

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[260] Yang and Siddiqi, 577-579.

[261] Tang, 222-223.

[262] Elleman, Kotkin, and Schofield, 318.

[263] Tang, 226-228.

Sino-India relations

Expanding economic relations does not equal warmth in Sino-Indian bilateral relations. From a historical standpoint, scholars argue that the Sino-India conflict in 1962 was the first military confrontation between the two civilizations "in over a thousand years."[264] Today, the Sino-Indian territorial dispute is arguably one of the world's largest territorial disputes by area and is approximately the size of the "US state of Alabama."[265]

The obstacles in Sino-India bilateral relations are geo-strategic, territorial, and economic in nature. From a security standpoint, China's growing naval presence in the Indian Ocean and incursions by Chinese soldiers into Chinese-claimed territory in India are sources of friction in Sino-Indian relations.[266] From a geo-strategic perspective, China's "String of Pearls" naval policy and anti-India Sino-Pakistan relations continue to remain a source of tension for India.[267] In the struggle for natural resources, China's water rerouting and other water transfer projects on the Tibetan plateau have devastating implications for both India and Bangladesh as co-riparian states.[268]

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[264] Kieschnick and Shahar, 2-3.

[265] Elleman, Kotkin, and Schofield, 317.

[266] Matthew Southerland, Iacob Koch-Weser, and Angela Zhang, "China-India Relations: Tensions Persist Despite Growing Cooperation," *Current Politics and Economics of Northern and Western Asia* 24, no. 1 (2015): 35, accessed March 19, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search.proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/doc view/1770385191?accountid=28992.

[267] Tang, 229; Southerland, Koch-Weser, and Zhang, 35, 42-43.

[268] Brahma Chellaney, "India's Intractable Border Dispute with China," in *Beijing's Power and China's Borders: Twenty Neighbors in Asia*, ed. Bruce A. Elleman, Stephen Kotkin, and Clive H. Schofield (Armonk, GB: Routledge, 2014), 58, accessed March 24, 2016, ProQuest ebrary.

Tibet has been a pivotal factor in Sino-Indian relations since China's occupation of Tibet in the 1950s. China resents the Dalai Lama's presence in India and fears that India will use his presence, along with that of Tibetan refugees, to reduce Beijing's control over Tibet.[269]

From an economic perspective, China has been India's largest trading partner since 2008, with a large trade imbalance in favor of China. In 2012, China's GDP was three times the size of India's, and foreign direct investment was 11 times that of India.[270] Although China is unwilling to accept the territorial status quo with India, China is more than willing to push for economic access to a growing Indian market.[271]

Despite frictions in relations, China and India are committed to cooperation through both bilateral and multilateral forums. India and China are members of important multilateral forums such as the Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa (BRICS) group. International issues of terrorism, stability in Afghanistan, and climate change are some key areas of bilateral cooperation.[272] In an effort to correct the trade imbalance, China has also committed to invest $20 Billion in India. Investment opportunities in Indian infrastructure offer scope for significant bilateral cooperation.[273]

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[269] Southerland, Koch-Weser, and Zhang, 44.

[270] Ibid., 45-49.

[271] Chellaney, 58.

[272] Southerland, Koch-Weser, and Zhang, 50-53.

[273] Ibid., 51.

Two facets of Kautilya's doctrine seem to be at play in China's approach to India. In the context of Kautilya's *Sadgunya* (six-fold) policy, China appears to adopt *Dvaidhibhava* or a dual policy with India. While maintaining all-weather relations with Pakistan, China retains a veneer of civility in adversarial relations with India. Collusive Sino-Pakistan treaties aimed at containing India also support this argument. The application of of Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) theory to contemporary Sino-Indian relations indicate that China considers India as an adversary or an enemy state.

Sino-North Korea relations

In the international community, China, being North Korea's closest ally, holds crucial political and diplomatic leverage in Pyongyang.[274] From 1949 onwards, North Korea and China have shared warm bilateral relations due to a common socialist ideology, mutual defense agreements, and Chinese economic assistance to North Korea.[275] The existence of Taiwan and South Korea fuel China and North Korea's frustrations as "divided nations."[276]

An increasing Chinese economic influence in North Korea raises fears of Chinese "colonisation of North Korea."[277] Contemporary China maintains a military alliance with

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[274] Nanto et al., 94, 97, 99.

[275] Ibid., 99.

[276] Andrew Scobell, *China and North Korea: From Comrades-in-arms to Allies at Arm's Length* (Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, U.S. Army War College, 2004), 2, accessed May 3, 2016, https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015053024769;view =1up;seq=4; Nanto et al., 99.

[277] Seung-Hyun Yoon and Seung-Ook Lee, "From old Comrades to new Partnerships: Dynamic Development of Economic Relations between China and North

North Korea and provides the largest share of economic assistance to Pyongyang. China is also North Korea's largest trading partner as well as a provider of food, fuel, and machinery.[278] Some scholars argue that Sino-North Korean relations have transitioned from "one-sided economic support by China into strategic and mutual cooperation."[279] Others suggest that China is developing cross border infrastructure opposite North Korea in North East China as a long-term measure for economic growth and regional stability.[280]

Two viewpoints have emerged about Sino-North Korean relations. From the first perspective, China is firmly committed towards a "non-nuclear Korean peninsula."[281] Criticism of North Korea's policies among Chinese scholars and state controlled Chinese media indicates that Sino-North Korean relaitons are no longer characterized by the same warmth as in the previous decades. China plays a genuinely supportive role in US efforts towards a stable Korean peninsula. China has limited leverage, however, which it risks losing by curtailing agro-economic assistance to North Korea.[282] From the second perspective, China continues to withhold using its substantial leverage in North Korea to undermine US influence in Asia, while working in close coordination with North Korea

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Korea," *The Geographical Journal* 179, no. 1 (March 2013), 28, accessed March 20, 2016, doi:10.1111/geoj.2013.179.issue-1.

[278] Nanto and Manyin, 94, 99.

[279] Yoon and Lee, 19.

[280] Ibid., 19-24.

[281] Nanto and Manyin, 98.

[282] Ibid., 97-99.

to keep US geo-strategic responses off balance. In Chinese security calculations, North Korea continues to serve as a "buffer state" against US forces in South Korea and Japan.[283] Chinese scholars assert that closer economic ties between China and Korea are the only way to reduce Korea's geo-political instability and induce economic progress.[284]

From a Kautilyan perspective, contemporary Sino-North Korean relations indicate that North Korea is China's ally. The argument that, consistent with Kautilya's philosophy about allies, China does not trust North Korea completely, is tenuous at best and merits further research.

China's relations with Vietnam, The Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia

China has been one of the largest economic partners of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in an increasingly interlinked trade framework.[285] However, territorial disputes in the South China Sea mar China's relations with Vietnam, The Philippines, Indonesia, and Malaysia.

In 1999, China and Vietnam resolved their land dispute and in 2000, both countries negotiated the maritime boundary dispute over the Gulf of Tonkin.[286] However,

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[283] Ibid., 98-99.

[284] Yoon and Lee, 27-28.

[285] Wan-Ping Tai and Jenn-Jaw Soong, "Trade Relations Between China and Southeast," *Chinese Economy* 47, no. 3 (May 2014): 27, accessed March 22, 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.2753/CES1097-1475470302.

[286] Elleman, Kotkin, and Schofield, 315-316.

disputes over the South China Sea including Paracel and the Spratly islands remains a major friction point in bilateral relations.[287]

Land and maritime boundary disputes between The Philippines, China, and Taiwan are highly contested and complex in nature. China-Taiwan-Philippines disputes include a large number of islands and other maritime features in the South China Sea.[288] The 2012 Scarborough Shoal incident demonstrated China's open usage of coercive and punitive tactics for supporting Chinese claims in the South China Sea. Only Vietnam supported The Philippines when the latter sought support from ASEAN over the incident. Other nations either perceived the incident as a bilateral issue or found fault in The Philippines' actions.[289]

China has not contested Indonesia's maritime activities and maritime boundary agreements with Vietnam. Officially, Indonesia maintains that "it [Indonesia] does not have a maritime boundary with China in the South China Sea."[290]

Although Malaysia and China signed a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership pact in 2013, China and Malaysia have conflicting claims in the South China Sea.[291] China

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[287] Ibid., 313.

[288] Ibid., 314-315.

[289] Renato De Castro, "The Philippines Confronts China in the South China Sea: Power Politics Vs. Liberalism-Legalism," *Asian Perspective* 39, no. 1 (January 2015): 95-96, accessed March 22, 2016, https://lumen.cgsccarl.com/login?url=http://search. proquest.com.lumen.cgsccarl.com/docview/1655119098?accountid=28992.

[290] Elleman, Kotkin, and Schofield, 314.

[291] Ngeow Chow Bing, "Comprehensive Strategic Partners but Prosaic Military Ties: The Development of Malaysia--China Defence Relations 1991-2015," *Contemporary Southeast Asia: A Journal of International and Strategic Affairs* 37, no. 2

has repeatedly objected to Malaysian occupation and development of marine features in the South China Sea. China has also objected to Malaysia and Vietnam jointly submitting their official standing regarding the South China Sea disputes to the UN Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf under the UN Conventional on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).[292]

The motivations behind China's varied relations with the littoral states of the South China Sea include national prestige, security, and energy concerns. China wishes to neutralize its vulnerability to an economic blockade in the South China Sea while retaining the advantage of exploiting the large hydrocarbon reserves in the area.[293] Chinese rhetoric with South East Asian nations has been coercive and intimidating in nature. Since China favors dispute resolutions through bilateral dialogue over multilateral forums, China particularly resents "America's insertion between China and its neighbors" over disputes in the South China Sea.[294]

From the perspective of China's relative power superiority in the maritime disputes in the South and East China Seas, China is able to coerce and dominate other littoral states of the region. China endeavors to obtain a status quo in its favor by leveraging its diplomatic strengths supported by a growing military prowess and economic strength.

(August 2015): 269, 298, accessed March 22, 2016, EBSCOhost, http://dx.doi.org/10.1355/cs37-2e.

[292] Elleman, Kotkin, and Schofield, 314.

[293] Ibid., 315-317.

[294] Ibid., 316.

In context of Kautilya's *Mandala* theory, Vietnam, Malaysia, and The Philippines fall in the category of China's adversaries while Indonesia falls in the category of China's ally. Assuming that China has a larger value of national power in comparison to Malaysia, Vietnam, and The Philippines, these countries fall in the category of Kautilya's weaker states. This paper's study of China's geo-political environment indicates certain similarities with Kautilya's strategic thought.

In Kautilyan terminology, China follows a *Dvaidhibhava* or dual policy in South Asia, by adopting a cooperative relationship with Pakistan and aggressive relations with India. In the South China Sea, China adopts the policy of peace with Malaysia and hostility with Vietnam. On its eastern border, China has peaceful relations with North Korea and potentially hostile relations with Japan.

The current research indicates that China follows Kautilya's doctrine of designing foreign policy from an inter-state relative power standpoint. Contemporary China follows a calculative strategy and has a different approach in its dealings with the US and other great powers compared to less powerful states such as Vietnam and The Philippines.

China's policy towards allies is congruent with Kautilya's prioritization of the *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state). Compared to internal constituent elements of the state, Kautilya considers allies unreliable. Kautilya places allies last in the order of importance of the seven *Prakṛti*. This aspect bears similarity with China's limited number of enduring allies and larger number of adversarial states. Based on this paper's research, out of 22 neighboring states, China considers only Pakistan and North Korea to be reliable allies. Therefore, in-line with Kautilya's strategic thought, China appears to place

more emphasis on consolidating its internal *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state) than relying on allies for securing its core interests.

Having explored China's contemporary geo-political environment, this paper will now analyse China's *Mandala* (circle of states).

China's *Mandala* (Circle of States)

Within China's hypothetical *Mandala* (circle of states) Japan is positioned as China's principal enemy, Russia as the middle king, and the US as the all-powerful neutral king (see figure 15). In terms of allies, Pakistan stands out as an all-weather Chinese ally, while China shares strong bonds with North Korea.
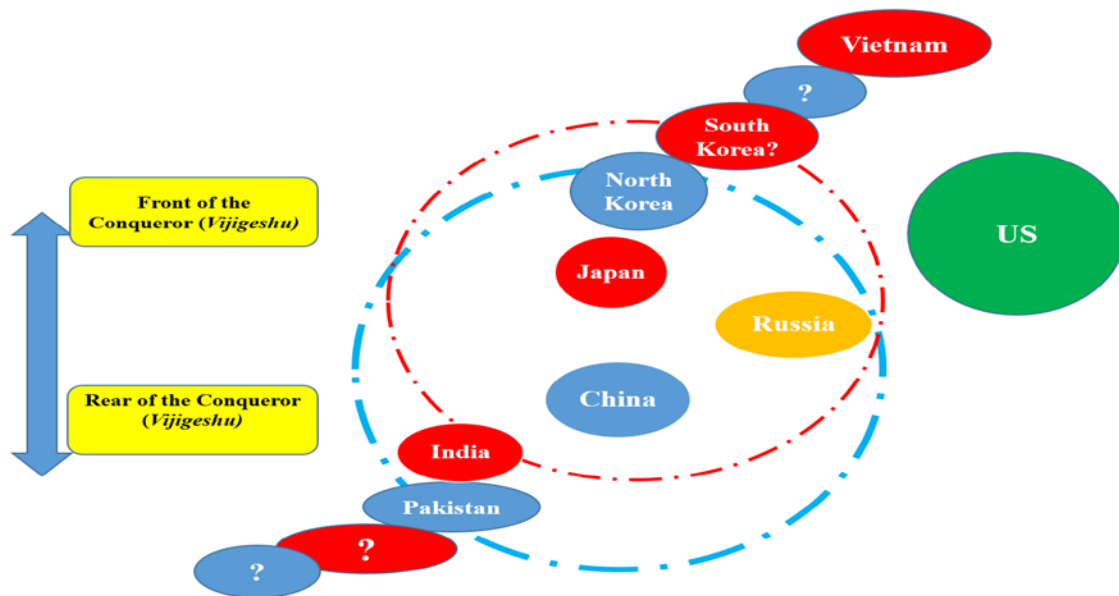

Figure 15. China's circle of states with Japan as an adversary

Source: Created by author.

In this circle of states, North Korea serves as China's ally and Pakistan serves as China's rearward ally. India acts as China's rearward enemy and therefore forms a part of Japan's circle of allies. South Korea fits in Japan's circle of allies, since South Korea is North Korea's principal adversary. Vietnam being a Chinese adversary also fits in this depiction of China's *Mandala*.

This model corroborates the importance of US and Russia in the balance of power in Asia. China's *Mandala* or circle of states indicates that a strategic alliance of India-US-Japan can effectively counter China's circle of allies. As the middle king, Russia's ambivalence towards China is likely to assist an alliance of India, the US, and Japan. Strengthening of an alliance between China, Russia, Pakistan, and North Korea could create a viable anti-US alliance, which could change the current international order.

This model supports the US rebalance to Asia as a strategic balancer of Chinese extra-territorial aspirations in Asia. As Kautilya's neutral state, the US would need to rebalance towards Asia, adopt the mantle of an arbitrator *cum* peace-builder for the Asian continent, and maintain a relative national power advantage with respect to China. In Kautilyan terms, such a role would add to the international prestige of the US, minimize chances of the reduction of US national power, contain China's pursuit of power, and maintain the existing peaceful international order.

A critical examination of Kautilya's *Mandala* (circle of states) suggest that it oversimplifies the complex contemporary international order. This model essentially oversimplifies inter-state relations while not including non-state actors, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental agencies, and other international organizations. This oversimplification has the potential to keep significant threats,

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challenges, and opportunities in the blind spot of policy makers. The next few paragraphs apply Kautiya's strategic thought in analyzing China's policy options as a weaker *Vijigishu* challenging a stronger state i.e. the US using Kautilya's prescriptive doctrine.

Policy Options for a Weaker China Facing the US

A weaker China following Kautilya's doctrine should focus on preempting the stronger state's aggressive strategies. Going by Kautilya's advice, China should preempt and prevent conflict by allying with a superior power or offering peace to an aggressive state. The US, being the only superpower, limits China's choices for bandwagoning. In this case, China as a weaker *Vijigishu* can adopt Kautilya's advice and adopt a proactive policy to delay or deter the US from entering into a conflict with China using the four stratagems of conciliation, offering gifts (asymmetric economic benefits), causing dissension, and application of force. Such a proactive policy, according to Kautilya, includes using offensive diplomatic warfare and concealed warfare to force the stronger state–in this case the US–to accept peace. In current geo-political environment, China is pursuing analogous strategies of countering the US diplomatically while simultaneously launching a covert cyber warfare campaign. China's strategy, *taken to its extreme Kautilyan conclusion*, could further manifest itself as the formation of a larger coalition against the US, incitement of dissension in the US, and promotion of the defection or assassinations of US leaders.

Since Kautilya did not consider economic relations between states as a factor in conflict deterrence, China's economic relations with the US indicate a limitation to the contemporary explanatory power of Kautilya's doctrine. As the US markets are a critical

piece of China's pursuit of economic progress, the Sino-US economic linkages by themselves have the capacity of deterring conflict between the two nations.

Summary

This chapter's purpose was to answer the third and fourth secondary research questions in order to identify the *Arthaśāstra*'s contemporary relevance. The first section of this chapter addressed the third research question: what are the similarities and dissimilarities between the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought? The second part of this chapter explored China's contemporary geo-political environment, including China's strategic behavior, and analysed them through the lens of Kautilya's strategic thought. The second part of this chapter thus answered the fourth secondary research question: how can we use Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* to assess the contemporary geo-political environment? The comparison of an ancient Indian treatise's strategic thought with contemporary strategic thought provided a mix of similarities and dissimilarities in ideas and concepts.

In terms of similarities, Kautilya's doctrine corresponds to both contemporary realist as well as idealist schools of thought, concept of national power, theory of the balance of power, theory on power transition, and the theory of victory. Kautilya's concepts of society's intrinsic anarchy, *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of power), relative power, *Sadgunya* or six-fold policy, types of warfare, formulation of strategy, strategic information operations, and consolidating victory bear significant resemblance to contemporary concepts.

In terms of dissimilarities, Kautilya's doctrine does not explore the concept of soft power and leveraging the economic instrument of power in his treatise. This paper's

research indicates that his instruments of power are DIM- (diplomatic, information, and military) centric, and therefore do not account for economic power in strategy.

The study of China's contemporary strategic behavior and the geo-political environment in which it manifests itself identified an authoritarian state with a focus on economic progress, military modernization, and territorial integrity. China's growth as a regional power is challenging the established international power system. China has territorial disputes with most of its neighbors and has significant interests in achieving a favorable status quo. A study of China's foreign relations indicated that Pakistan and North Korea are Chinese allies, while Russia has ambiguous relations with China. The US, Japan, and India obstruct China's rise as a regional and global power, and of these nations China views the US to be its principal adversary.

As a *Vijigishu* (would-be conqueror), China represents Kautilya's ideal of an aspiring regional power pursuing the twin objectives of power and "happiness." The concentration of China's internal power in the political leadership is similar to Kautilya's prioritization of *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state). However, unlike Kautilya's king with his social contract, China does not exhibit an obligatory leader-population contract.

China's *Mandala* or circle of states with the US as an adversary does not lend credence to Kautilya's model, however keeping Japan as an adversary provides a perspective that is similar to the emerging US-Japan-India partnership in Asia. China's military modernization and diplomatic offensive strategy against the US is in line with Kautilya's strategy against a superior state, however economic interlinkages expose a weakness in Kautilya's doctrine. China's foreign policies do however bear similarities to Kautilya's various options of the *Sadgunya* (six-fold policy) concept.

China's *Mandala* (circle of states) model indicates the importance of the US role in a peaceful Asia, thus supporting the US policy of rebalance to Asia. Developing alliances with India and Japan are key aspects of the US rebalance to Asia. China's lack of allies creates a vulnerability in China's policies, which supports the development of mutually supportive alliances in Asia and the role of the US as Kautilya's neutral king.

The analysis of China's *Mandala* (circle of states) shows that rather than adopting an adversarial stance, the US could potentially play a more advantageous role in the Asian power struggle as a neutral king. As a neutral state, the US can continue to support a peaceful regional and global international order. As a neutral state with a relative power advantage over China, the US can effectively deter Chinese actions, which destabilize the world or the region. Adopting a neutral king's role would also provide an opportunity for the US to preserve and grow US national power.

The fifth chapter of this paper will now conclude this paper by providing an assessment of Kautilya's contemporary relevance and ideas for further research.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> Know the enemy and know yourself; in a hundred battles you will never be in peril. When you are ignorant of the enemy but know yourself, your chances of winning or losing are equal. If ignorant both of your enemy and of yourself, you are certain in every battle to be in peril.
> — Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, trans.by Samuel B. Griffith

Overview of the Previous Four Chapters

The purpose of this paper was to examine the relevance of an ancient Indian treatise on statecraft–the *Arthaśāstra* written by Kautilya–to contemporary strategic thought. This paper adopted a two-pronged approach to this task. The first step identified the strategic thought of the treatise, described contemporary strategic thought, and then compared the two to make a comparison. The second step looked at a contemporary case, China's geo-political environment, from the perspective of Kautilya's strategic thought. In order to guide the research process, this paper identified one primary question and four secondary research questions and progressively answered the research questions over four chapters.

Over a course of four chapters, this paper introduced and progressively explored the *Arthaśāstra* as a treatise on statecraft, key ideas of contemporary strategic thought, and China's contemporary geo-political environment. The first chapter explored the identity of the treatise's author–Kautilya, the Mauryan Empire that followed Kautilya's doctrine, Indian historical linkages with Chinese culture, the language of the treatise, and the broad content of the treatise. The first chapter also introduced the idea of contemporary strategic thought.

The second chapter of the paper explored the extant literature on the *Arthaśāstra* and contemporary strategic thought. In this chapter, the paper identified Kautilya's strategic thought and certain macro theories of contemporary strategic thought, which are relevant to the concept of national power. This chapter also identified works, which have endeavored to identify Kautilya's contemporary relevance. The third chapter outlined the research methodology of the paper, which would guide the paper to its conclusion.

The fourth chapter compared Kautilya's and contemporary strategic thought, explored China's contemporary geo-political environment, and lastly analyzed China's geo-political environment using Kautilya's doctrine. By the end of the fourth chapter, the paper had answered all the secondary research questions and the primary research question. The next section of this chapter provides an assessment of this paper's research.

<u>Assessment of Kautilya's Strategic Thought</u>

The very fact that an ancient Indian empire could successfully control more than three different modern day nation-states for almost one and a half centuries indicates that the Mauryan Empire's strategy could produce enduring success. This paper's research indicates that Kautilya's doctrine provided a framework for designing and formulating strategy in the Mauryan Empire, one that is very similar to contemporary strategic thought.

Research into the theories and concepts of national power in contemporary strategic thought indicate that a majority of Kautilya's strategic ideas are present in the contemporary body of knowledge. Kautilya's theories of *Matsya Nyaya* (anarchy in society), *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of a state's power), relative power between states, *Sadgunya* (six fold foreign policy), *Upayas* (four stratagems), and strategic information

operations have been explored by generations of strategists leading to the evolution of contemporary thought on strategy.

This paper's research indicates that Kautilya's prioritization of *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state) and the model of relative power is largely unique and bears the potential of contributing to the body of contemporary strategic thought. Kautilya's concepts of *Prakṛti* (constituent elements of state), the model of relative power, and the concept of *Vyasana* (calamities affecting the constituent elements of state) offer a viable path for optimizing a state's national power. In context of these Kautilyan concepts, the *Arthaśāstra* as a doctrine can largely explain China's contemporary geo-political environment.

Kautilya's concept of the pursuit of power and happiness as well as his idea of the *Mandala* (circle of states) find congruence in contemporary China's geo-political environment. The ideological drivers of China's growth are akin to the *Arthaśāstra*'s objective of continued national progress through the pursuit of national power and a national happiness quotient. Although the *Mandala* theory oversimplifies China's international relations and does not provide a cohesive picture of the international power system, China's *Mandala* can identify potential regional alliances for promoting Chinese interests as well as strategic alliances for countering the China threat. Kautilya's concepts of relative power and the six-fold policy also hold true for contemporary China.

Consistent with Kautilya's concept of relative power, China designs its foreign policy based on the relative power status of other nations. China adopts a different approach for interacting with the US or Russia, as opposed to interactions with weaker nations like Vietnam or The Philippines. China's foreign policy choices are in line with

Kautilya's *Sadgunya* (six-fold) policy and his advice for a weaker state challenging a stronger state.

China's policies of military modernization, peace treaties, and dual policy resemble Kautilya's six-fold policy. Kautilya's policy of *Yana* (preparing for war) is similar to China's policy of military modernization. Similar to Kautilya's concept of *Sandhi* (peace treaties), China used peace and peace treaties for progressively developing its national power. Kautilya's concept of undeclared warfare can describe China's cyber warfare against the US. With India, China adopts Kautilya's policy of *Dvaidhibhava* (dual policy) by adopting Pakistan as an ally and maintaining adversarial relations with India. Although Kautilya's doctrine has many similarities with contemporary strategic thought and largely explains China's geo-political environment, this paper identified certain lilitations of Kautilya's doctrine as well.

Kautilya's doctrine falls short in exploring two major concepts–soft power and economic power. Kautilya's doctrine addresses different shades of hard power, but fails to identify soft power as a major dimension of national power. Apart from soft power, Kautilya's treatise does not explore the advantages provided by a state's economic power and trade dependencies. In contemporary parlance, Kautilya focuses on using the instruments of power as DIM rather than DIME.

This paper's comparison of Kautilya's ancient treatise with modern strategic thought and application to contemporary China's geopolitical environment negates the paper's initial argument that the *Arthaśāstra's* sole relevance is as a historical text. Kautilya does deserve wider global acclaim as a pioneering strategist. Firstly, the concepts of contemporary strategic thought are similar to Kautilya's strategic thought

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written over 2000 years ago. Secondly, a majority of Kautilya's ideas hold good for evaluating and assessing China's contemporary geo-political environment as well.

<p style="text-align:center">Recommendations for Future Research</p>

This paper recommends that further work on Kautilya's *Arthaśāstra* should be along two avenues of research–a historical path and a general studies perspective.

From a historical perspective, this paper did not compare Kautilya's thought with that of Thucydides, Machiavelli, or Sun Tzu. Hence, a comparative study from a historical perspective could provide evidence for the genesis of modern concepts of strategic thought. Such a study may confirm the pioneering nature of Kautilya's work in terms of contribution towards contemporary strategic thought.

From the aspect of exploring specific strategic topics, future research could also look at designing a contemporary *Mandala* theory, which can successfully capture the ambiguity of current international relations and the diversity of actors. Research could also explore the role of *Vyasana* (calamities) in a state's national power.

Kautilya's options for peace, alliances, and strategic options for a weaker state, also need further research. Studies in these aspects could do so using contemporary concepts of prevention, preemption, deterrence, coercion, and compellance.

This paper thus concludes that the *Arthaśāstra*'s strategic thought is relevant to contemporary military strategists. Further research in Kautilya's treatise should add to the contemporary body of knowledge on strategic thought.

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